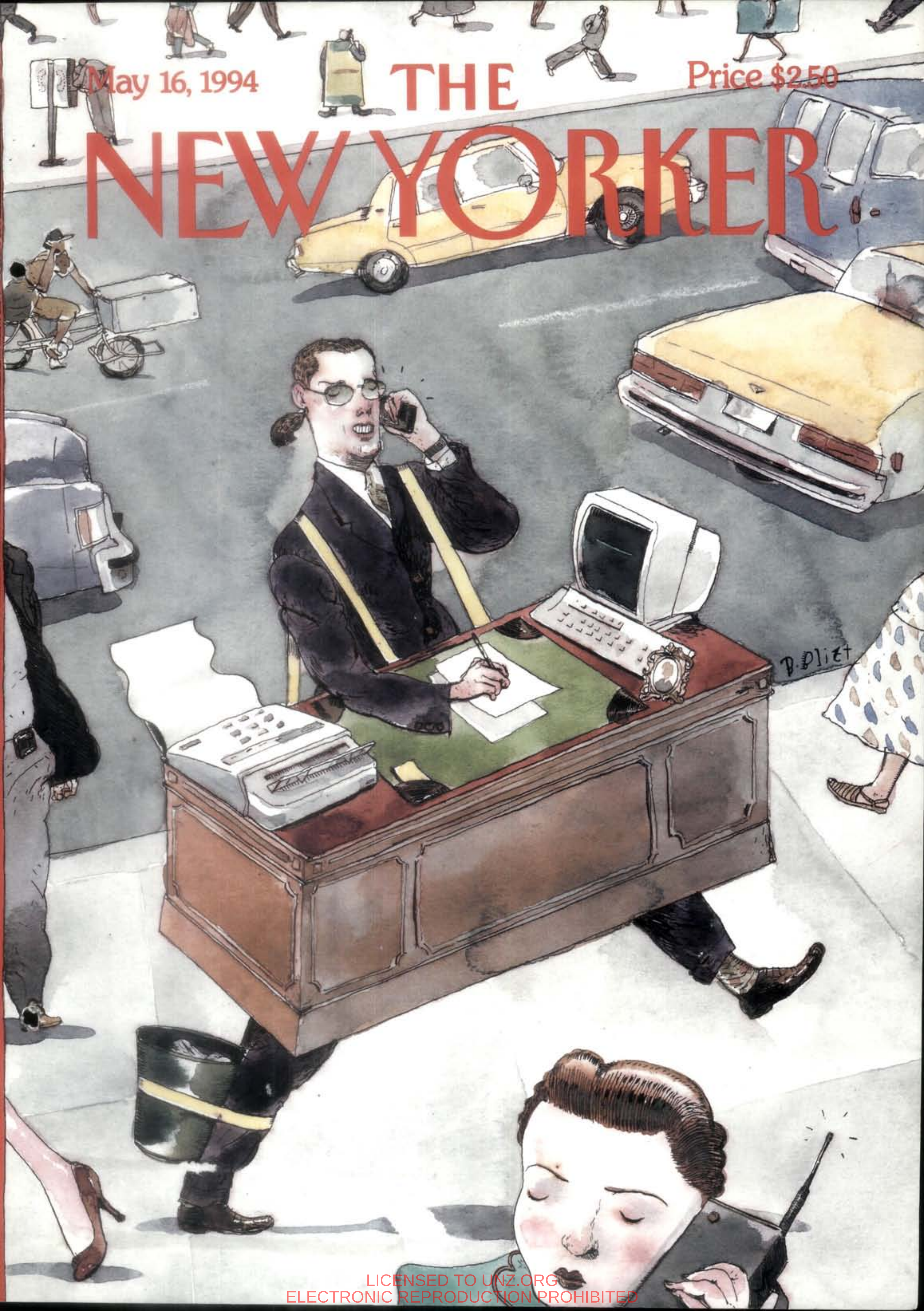

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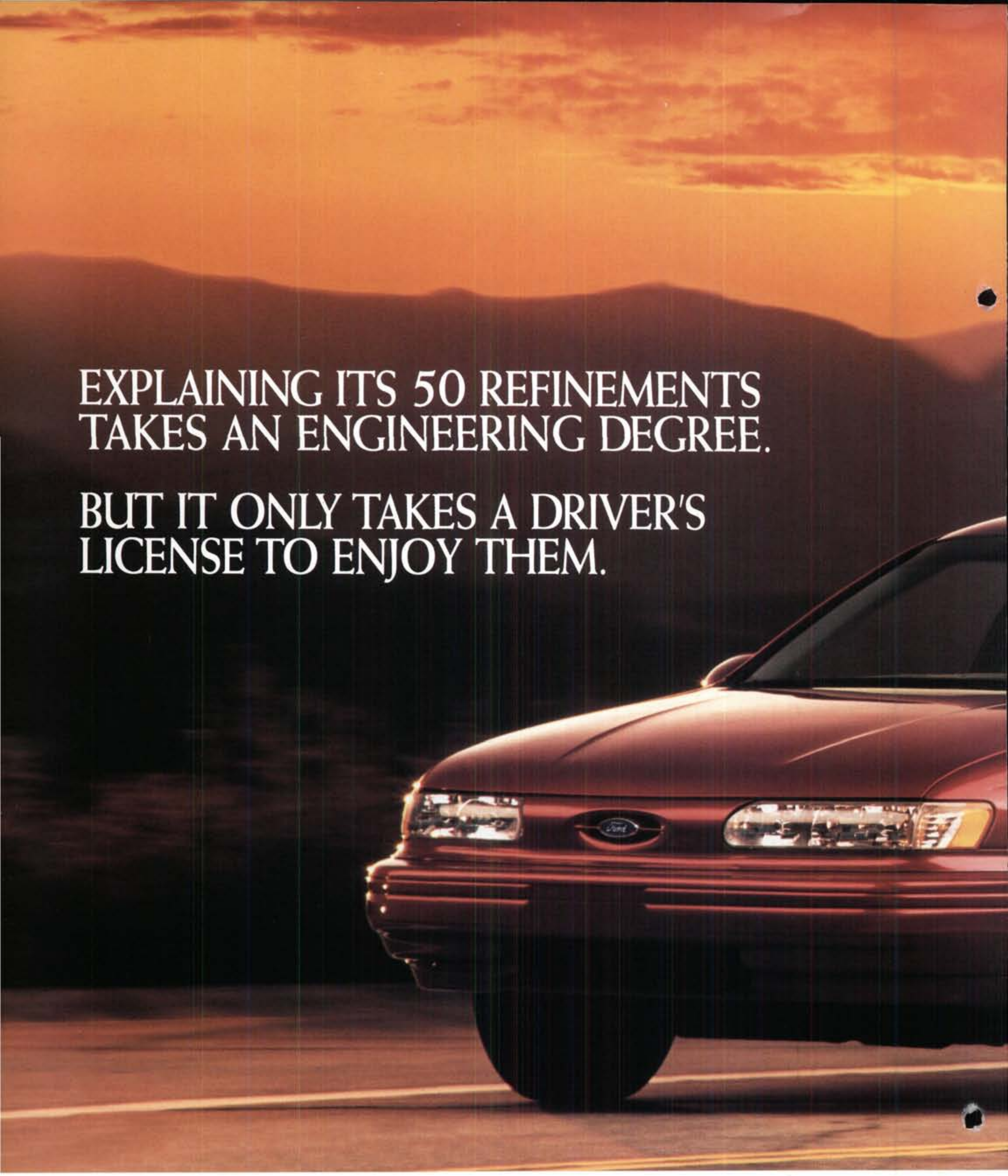
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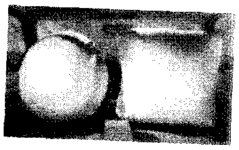

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THE NEW YORKER

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COMMENT Just a Dataway 6
For directions on the information highway, ask Mr. Jefferson.

IN THE MAIL 10

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 12

THE TALK OF THE TOWN 39
Miss New York's bottom line, order on the Knicks court, etc.

DEPARTMENTS

Annals of Crime Witness for the Prosecution . . . . *Joyce Johnson* 42
Dr. Park Dietz, who convinced a jury that Jeffrey Dahmer is sane, has turned his talents to the Joel Rifkin trial.

Letter from Mexico Zapata's Heirs . . . . *Alma Guillermoprieto* 52
A tour of the rebel-held region reveals why the crisis exploded in Chiapas, and why the standoff continues.

Annals of Law Judge Motley's Verdict . . . . *Marie Brenner* 65
As a new generation debates integration, Constance Motley tells what it took to win the biggest battle, forty years ago.

A REPORTER AT LARGE The Chairman and His Wife . . . . . *Mary Anne Weaver* 72
In a marriage that stunned the Middle East, Yasir Arafat and Suha Tawil, the First Couple of the P.L.O., work to build a homeland and a home life.

FAMILY ALBUM Gluyas Williams . . . . *Richard Merkin* 86

FICTION "Mistral" . . . . *Angela Huth* 88

THE CRITICS

Books John Lydon's "Rotten" . . . . *James Wolcott* 95
Jazz Vernel Bagneris's "Hoo-Dude" . . . . *Whitney Balliett* 98
The Theatre "Three Tall Women," "An Inspector Calls" . . . . *John Lahr* 102
The Current Cinema "Kika," "That's Entertainment! III" . . . . . . *Anthony Lane* 106
Books Briefly Noted 109

POEMS

"Breathing" . . . . *Octavio Paz* 74
"Blue Hydrangea" . . . . *Edward Hirsch* 84

SHOUTS AND MURMURS Spray-Painting Singapore . . . . *Bill Franzen* 110

COVER *Upwardly Mobile, by Barry Blitt*

DRAWINGS *Mick Stevens, David Mazzucchelli, Arnie Levin, Edward Koren, Victoria Roberts, Leo Cullum, Michael Crawford, Sam Gross, Charles Barsotti, Robert Weber, Bob Knox, Mischa Richter, Robert Mankoff, Mike Twohy, Dean Vietor, J.B. Handelsman, Bruce Eric Kaplan, Jack Ziegler*

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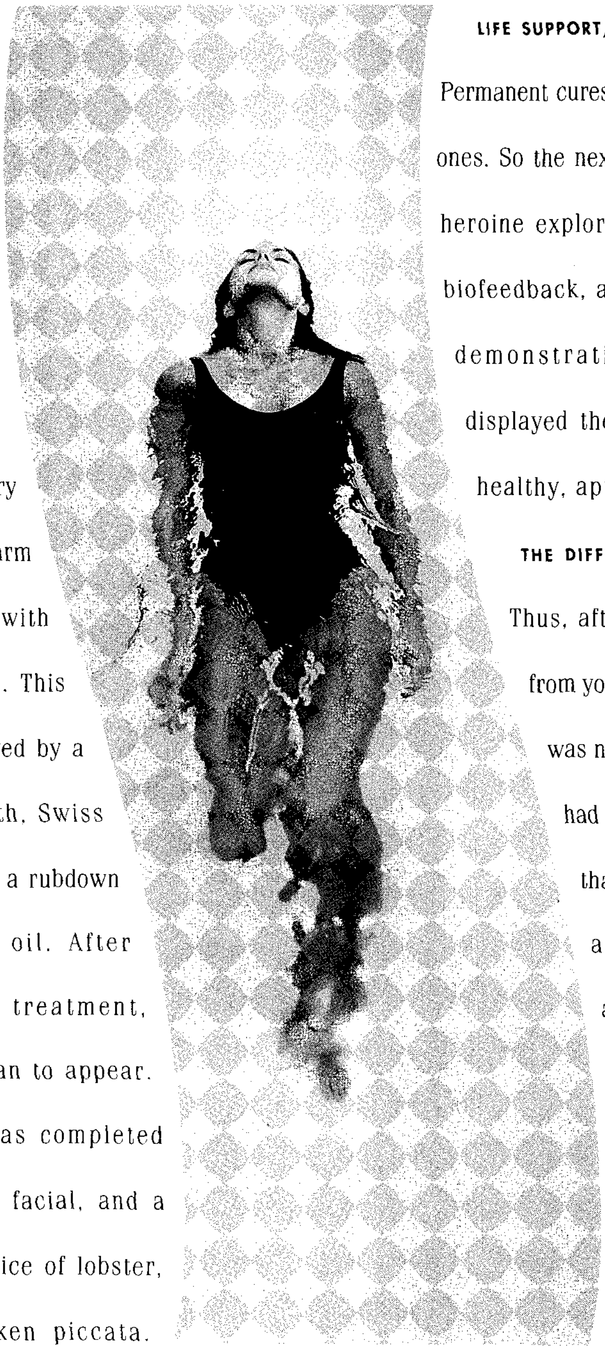
Woman brought back to life after 36 years.



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COMMENT

JUST A DATAWAY

IT is customary for business executives who complain about oppressive government regulation to suggest that the ultimate victim is the public interest. In this respect, the widespread fascination with the coming "information superhighway," or "data highway," has been a godsend for complaining executives in the field of telecommunications. This year, two ballyhooed mergers between telephone companies and cable-TV outfits have gone *phffft*—the one between Bell Atlantic and Tele-Communications, Inc., and, more recently, the one between Southwestern Bell and Cox Cable Communications. In both cases, executives blamed federally mandated cable-rate rollbacks that had cast doubt on the value of cable companies. In both cases, we were told that the real issues were more exalted than mere money. One conservative columnist described the Bell Atlantic–T.C.I. affair this way: "Here were two companies prepared to bring into being, at considerable risk to themselves, the fabled superhighway"—until they encountered "the hubris of the regulatory bureaucrats."

Implicit in such accounts are two major claims: first, that the fusion of cable and telephone companies would result in the emergence of a robust dataway (as we might as well call it); second, that the Federal Communications Commission's rollback of cable rates, by discouraging the fusion, shows how the Clinton Administration's knee-jerk regulatory impulse threatens that emergence. The two claims are about equally dubious. There are valid criticisms of the Administration's dataway policy, but, so far, overregulation is not among them.

Dataway architecture can assume two basic forms. One is the cable-TV "tree-and-branch" model. A centralized programmer (T.C.I., say) sends out hundreds of channels and maintains a library from which videos and other cyberservices can be summoned. The second kind of architecture is modelled on the phone system—a "switched network," or diffuse web. People on this dataway are not just consumers but, potentially, providers, whether as amateurs (sending

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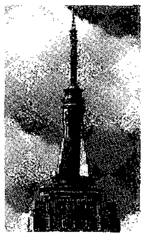

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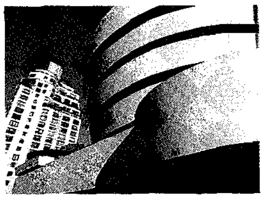

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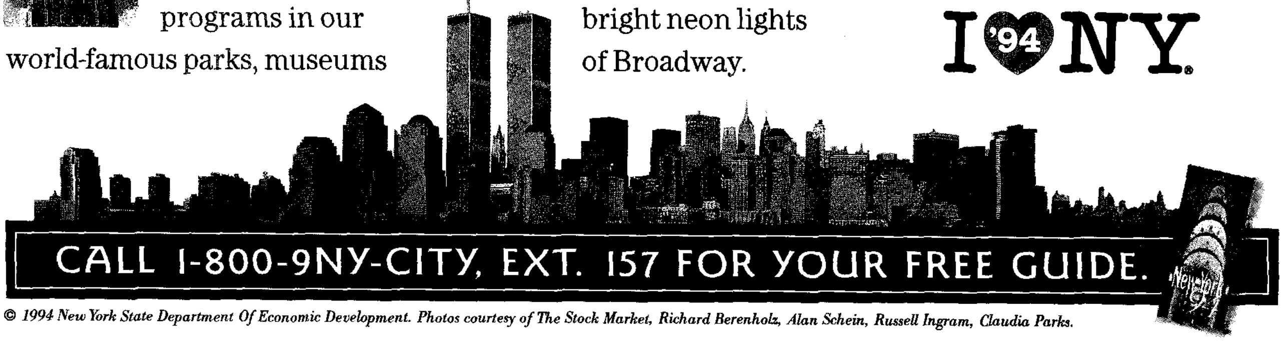

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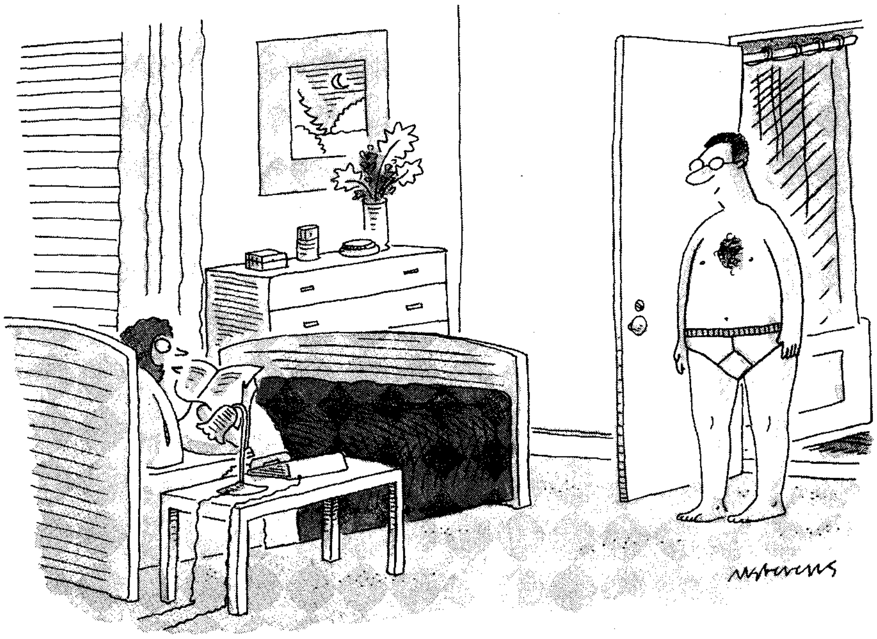
birthday videos to grandparents) or as professionals (starting a weekly talk show devoted to, say, teen-age angst, or peddling an eight-millimetre documentary on same). High-budget programming from the likes of Paramount or CBS News might still predominate on such a dataway, but grassroots creativity would presumably flourish, with energizing effects on cultural and political discourse. This decentralized model has been called Jeffersonian by its premier advocate, the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which is an eclectic Washington lobby group (mostly business people and techno-nerds). The other model has been called, with no doubt unfair but certainly evocative hyperbole, Stalinist.

A Jeffersonian dataway would not offer a completely smooth ride: it might multiply and deepen cultural and political fissures. But, whatever its faults, it does hold more appeal than letting some cable C.E.O. select five hundred channels for your home (rather than fifty, as now). Besides, the Jeffersonian approach is probably inevitable; the question is how much time and money will get wasted in the meantime.

Now, a merger between cable and phone companies that would bring forth a Jeffersonian network is certainly imaginable. But so is the alternative result—or some awkward combination of the Jeffersonian and the Stalinist. In any event, one doubts whether high-minded pondering of the ideals embedded in the two models is a major force in telecommunications mergers. The basic dynamic is often simpler: cable companies control lots of programming, which phone companies covet, and phone companies have lots of cash, which cable companies, like the rest of us, find attractive.

A little-noted fact: If no mergers happen, and phone companies proceed to replace copper wire with fibre optics (as they will probably do eventually), thus building a dataway with Jeffersonian potential, cable companies, and all other programmers, will still harbor a fondness for cash; and they will still be able to get it—by selling programs to any dataway denizen who wants them. What's more, the resulting traffic will justify the phone companies' investment in a fibre dataway, as long as they're allowed to charge adequate tolls. The idea that a healthy dataway requires some mystical "synergy" between cable and telephone expertise, and that this synergy can happen only under a single corporate roof, is nonsense. Quite hollow, therefore, are claims that the dataway's growth was dangerously stunted by the new Clinton cable rules (which in fact are relatively mild: they call for an average rate cut of seven per cent, whereas Bell Atlantic, which claimed to find this prospect so unsettling, had asserted last year in an F.C.C. filing that cable rates were inflated by twenty-eight per cent).

If anything, the Clinton Administration has been too slow off the regulatory mark. Its "vision" of the dataway is still a bit fuzzy—vaguely Jeffersonian, but lacking in crucial details and rich in potential contradictions. For example, we are told that market forces, not government subsidies, will build the dataway, but we are also promised "universal service"—broad bandwidth in every urban slum and Appalachian hollow. Universal service is a fine ideal, but if you're waiting for the market to bring it you'd better have a seat.



"Very Presidential."

A precisely comparable challenge, universal telephone service, was met by regulation. Artificially high rates for long-distance (and disproportionately commercial) users kept local service artificially cheap. And within the realm of local service urban and suburban users shouldered some of the otherwise exorbitant cost of rural service. There are other ways to insure broadly affordable access to a network, but all involve the government's stepping in.

The Administration's dataway czar, Al Gore, seems to realize this. Between paeans to market competition, he promises that the F.C.C. will figure out how to bring universal service. Meanwhile, however, he favors deregulation that may complicate the task: cable companies and long-distance carriers are to compete with the Baby Bells for local phone service, while the Bells compete with cable TV in video programming. This free-for-all may indeed help most data consumers, but it will deprive the government of the sort of simple handle that it seized decades ago to make phone service universal: a single, regulated monopoly whose assured revenue can be deployed to egalitarian ends.

The free-for-all may also lead to wasteful redundancy—two fibre cables side by side under Main Street, each only half used. And insuring equal access for all data providers, an essential element in the Jeffersonian vision, will be harder to do. For, once the phone companies are peddling their own wares over their wires, they will be tempted to make things tough for the competition. (If *Newsweek* owned the post office, delivery of *Time* might be spotty.)

There is no quarrelling with what seems to be the Clinton Administration's goal: a dataway open to all, with infinite choice, and no regulation of content—the digitalization of free speech. But whether freer markets will efficiently get us from here to there is another question, and one that Al Gore could stand to revisit. ♦

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MORE HARM THAN GOOD?

In the insightful Comment "Smoke Out" (April 11th), you laud Congress's 1965 mandate that the Surgeon General's warning label be placed on cigarette packages. It is a matter of historical debate whether health advocates or the tobacco industry masterminded the labelling act, but it now seems clear that the warning label actually gave the tobacco industry a priceless gift: as a result of the label, tobacco-company lawyers have consistently and successfully argued in court that Congress has preëmpted their responsibility for warning consumers about any diseases that cigarettes might cause. If we were truly serious about confronting an industry that is literally selling death, we would remove the government warning label and thus strip the tobacco industry of this privileged legal status.

Elizabeth M. Whelan
President
American Council on Science and Health
New York City

LIGHT FEET

The information superhighway has a speed limit: a signal can't go faster than light. The only glory of our quaint nonmetric system of measure is that this maximum speed is almost exactly one foot per nanosecond. So when Ken Auletta ("The Magic Box," April 11th) writes of a signal travelling in a nanosecond from a remote control to a TV and on to a node box no more than three-quarters of a mile away, and then to an operations center an unspecified distance from the node box and back again, it should be evident that the time he cites is at least ten thousand times too short for such a trip. Of course, no viewer would notice the ten-microsecond delay. But, if we insist on taking our silly units of length with us into the twenty-first century, can't we at least all learn the increasingly relevant fact that a nanosecond is nothing but a light foot?

N. David Mermin
Professor of Physics
Cornell University
Ithaca, N.Y.

GENIUS AT WORK

The Drew Friedman and K. Bidus cartoon "Cooking with Genius," in your April 4th issue, reminded me of a story that Philipp Frank, who was a professor of physics (with a special interest in the philosophy of physics) at Harvard when I was a graduate student there, told about Albert Einstein. As I remember, Frank followed Einstein as a professor at the University of Prague. The Franks invited the Einsteins to dinner. Mrs. Frank was cooking Hungarian goulash over a Bunsen burner, and the pot would not reach the boiling point. She explained the problem, and the two theoretical physicists examined the situation. Finally, Einstein said, "Perhaps if you put a cover on the pot it will boil faster."

Elroy O. LaCasce
Professor of Physics
Bowdoin College
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BERTON ROUECHÉ

WHEN Berton Roueché died, at the end of April, he had been writing for *The New Yorker* for almost fifty years. He was born in Kansas City in 1911, and worked as a newspaperman there and in St. Louis before joining the magazine, in 1944. A year later, he began a series of sparkling pieces about people who were left over from the nineteenth century—rural people who made maple syrup or grew potatoes. Then, possibly because his grandfather had been a doctor and he himself had had polio, he wrote his first medical piece. It dealt with the discovery of a hitherto unknown disease, rickettsialpox fever, and he wrote it as a tale of suspense. Reports on gout and sodium-nitrite poisoning followed, and the flow continued until 1991. (To refresh himself, he occasionally went back to the nineteenth century and wrote, for example, about trains and small towns and harvesting wild rice.) Roueché's medical pieces became doubly famous: lay readers found them scary and exciting, while doctors, impressed by their learning and clarity, used them as medical texts. William Shawn once wrote about his style, or non-style, "Certainly his is the art that conceals art. His words are so plain, his sentences so chaste, his rhythms so natural that one can overlook the presence of the writer and see straight through to the matter at hand."

Roueché was handsome, courtly, outgoing, and a lover of anecdotes. He wore Brooks Brothers clothes when he came to New York from Amagansett, where he lived for forty-five years, but he considered shined shoes an affectation. A kind of urbane country boy, he liked nothing better than gleaning new potatoes, then closing things down with a couple of Martinis and a glass of wine. (He was scrupulously cared for by his wife of nearly sixty years, Katherine Eisenhower—a niece of Ike's—and they had a son, Bradford.) He had grown up with the Kansas City jazz of Count Basie and Joe Turner, and he once said that he tried to imitate jazz rhythms in his writing. He relished the original he had of a 1963 Steinberg cover, showing a giant, blocky "E" sitting on a clump of grass and dreaming of a delicate capital "E" with an *accent aigu.* ♦

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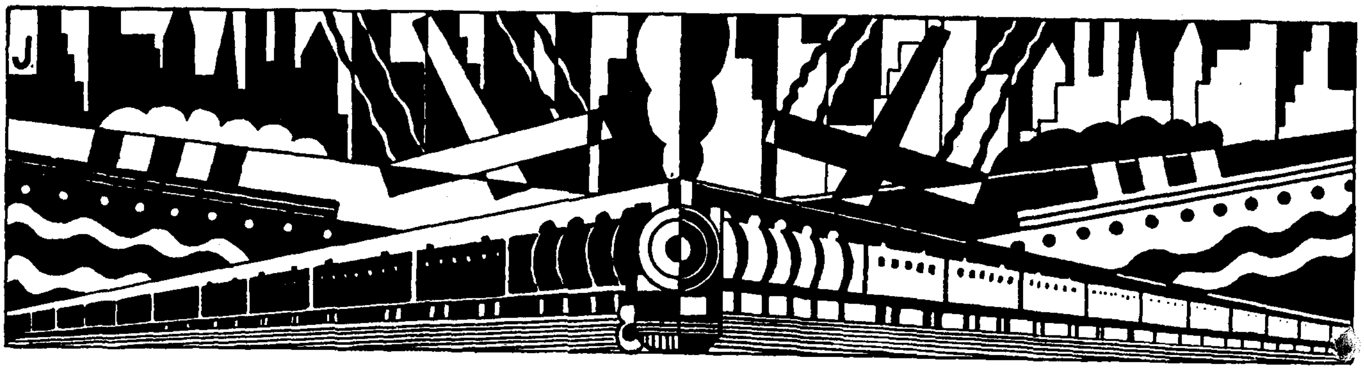

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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15	16	17	11	12	13	14

THE THEATRE

Bob^2

THE "high-definition comedy" of Bob & Bob—a.k.a. Paul Boocock and David Latham—is a channel-surf through the ether of wordplay. Latham (short, bespectacled) and Boocock (tall, mustachioed) specialize in elaborate verbal riffs and scenarios of escalating improbability. They wear matching brown outfits, like U.P.S. drivers, and bring a slightly glassy-eyed derangement to bear on the contemporary scene. Although their performances are scripted, the wild absurdity of their stream-of-consciousness routines seems as close to improvisational standup as it does to theatre.

On May 12, Bob & Bob will offer "Deluxe," their latest show, at HERE, the multi-arts complex at 145 Sixth Avenue (at Spring Street). The evening is an excursion into a parallel universe where phone-shopping through the mental detritus of Bob & Bob is the order of the day. Dial us, they exhort, for a complete selection of Bob & Bob—Bob & Bob with barbecue sauce, with béarnaise sauce, with hollandaise. The duo segues to "salsa" and thence to a samba, and before you know it you're aboard a fantasy cruise ship with a captain dangerously fond of the sauce. Other menu options are simulated eye surgery, internal body flossing, and the last moments of Nicolae Ceauşescu. Caveat emptor.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

Bring in the Morning—A musical by Gary William Friedman and Herb Schapiro that uses poetry, songs, and stories written by teen-agers. In previews. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

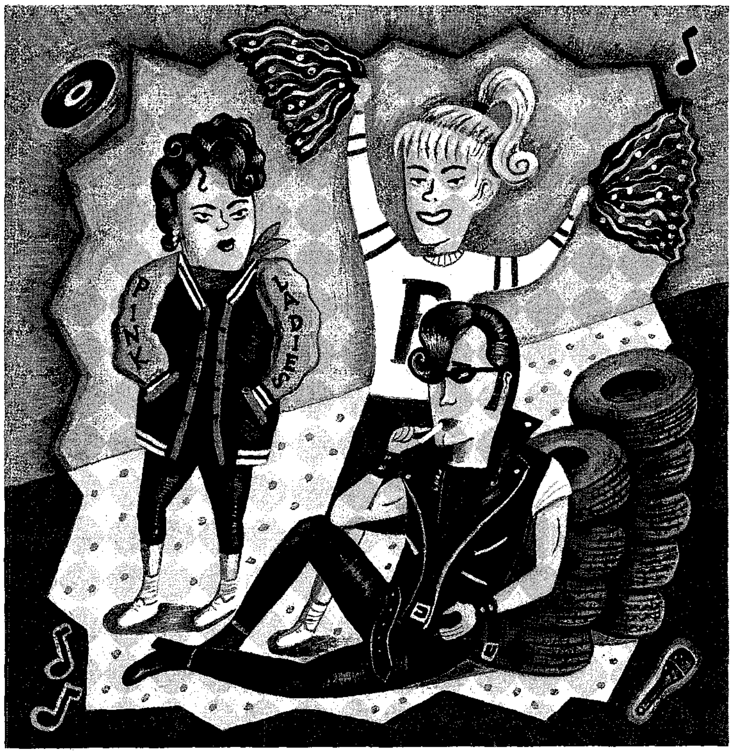
Grease!—Rosie O'Donnell is Rizzo, Ricky Paull Goldin is Danny, and Susan Wood is Sandy in Tommy Tune's production of the 1972 musical by Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey. Opens May 11 at 6:30. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

The Hyacinth Macaw—A new play by Mac Wellman. Opens May 14 at 8 and runs through June 5. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-7471.)

Hysterical Blindness and Other Southern Tragedies That Have Plagued My Life Thus Far—A musical comedy written by, and starring, Leslie Jordan. In previews. (Playhouse on Vandam, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555.)

In-Betweens—A play by Bryan Goluboff, with Mark Dendy, Carol Kane, Bruno Kirby, and D. B. Sweeney. In previews. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Kindertransport—Dana Ivey has the leading role in a play by Diane Samuels. Previews through May 15. Opens May 17 at 8. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)



Rosie O'Donnell, Susan Wood, and Ricky Paull Goldin in "Grease!"

SUSAN SYNARSKI

The Medium—Marshall McLuhan's life and writings inspired this multimedia (naturally) piece, conceived and directed by Anne Bogart. Previews through May 15. Opens May 16 at 8. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 302-6989.)

Milk and Honey—A revised version of Jerry Herman's 1961 musical about an American man and woman who meet and fall in love during a visit to Israel. Directed by Richard Sabellico. Previews through May 14. Opens May 15 at 7. (American Jewish Theatre, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797.)

Moe's Lucky Seven—Marlane Meyer's romantic comedy takes place in a bar during a dockworkers' strike. Previews through May 14. Opens May 15 at 7. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Sancho and Don—A "comedy/drama" written and performed by the Mexican mime/clown Sigfrido Aguilar and the American actor Jim Calder. Previews May 12-14. Opens May 15 at 3. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

subUrbia—This play by Eric Bogosian concerns some twenty-year-olds hanging out at a 7-Eleven. The cast includes Josh Hamilton, Martha Plimpton, and Steve Zahn. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

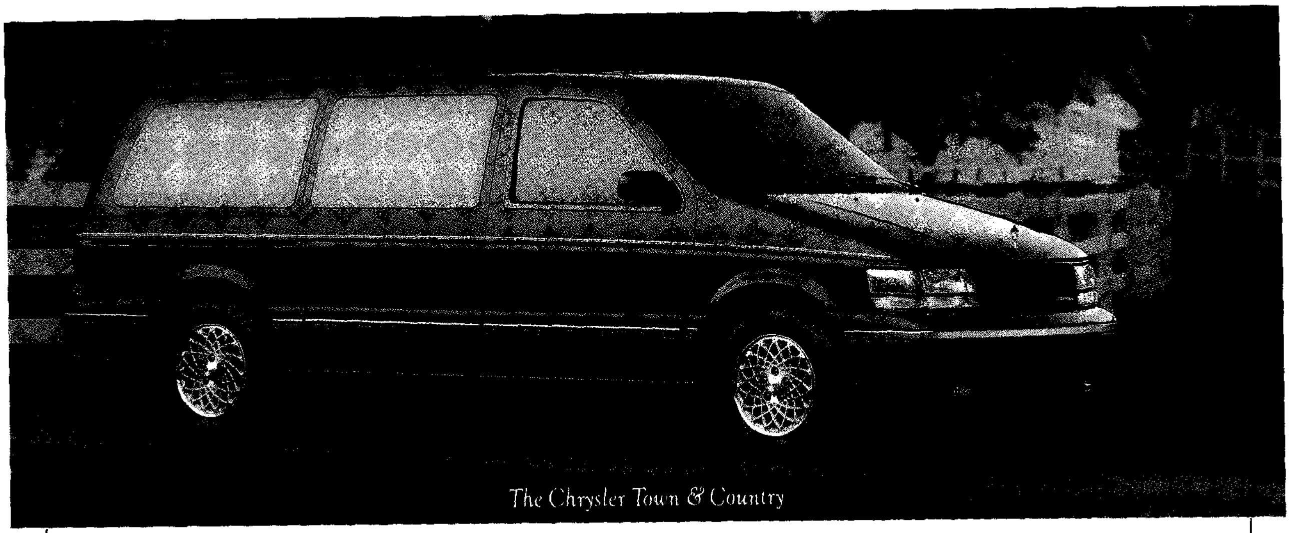
Sunday in the Park with George—Mandy Patinkin, Bernadette Peters, and the original Broadway cast in a tenth-anniversary concert performance of the Sondheim musical, which benefits Friends in Deed. One performance only, on May 15 at 7. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. For information about tickets, call 1-800 996-5433.)

OPENED RECENTLY

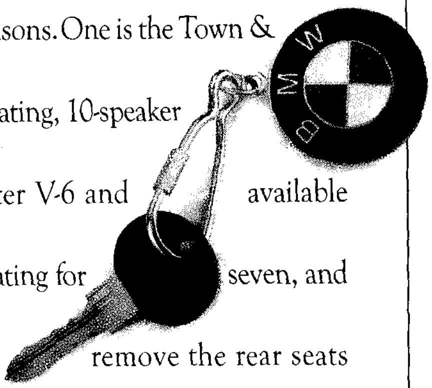
All in the Timing—Six sparkling short plays by David Ives add up to one enchanted evening. The playwright is a master both of wordplay and of the comic possibilities of the human predicament. Ives and the deft director, Jason McConnell Buzas, are wonderfully served by their actors, especially Robert Stanton and Nancy Opel, who possess the energy of Mickey and Judy and the profound goofiness of Sid and Imogene. Wendy Lawless, Ted Neustadt, and Michael Countryman do their part to keep the proceedings cruising along at top speed. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

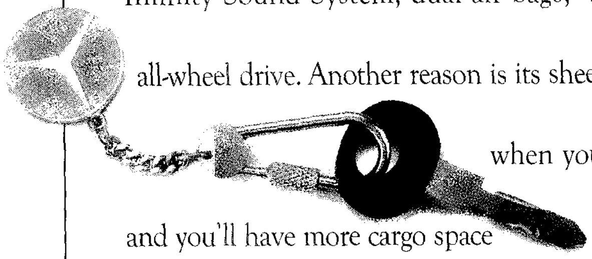
Amphigorey: A Musicale—Fifteen Edward Gorey stories set to music. With sets by Mr. Gorey, of course, and a score by Peter Golub. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 777-7474. Closes May 22.)

The Autobiography of Aiken Fiction—A black comedy by Kate Moira Ryan about two teen-age girls making their escape from the suburbs. (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 279-4200. Closes May 15.)


The Chrysler Town & Country

It's not surprising that people have been trading in cars for the Town & Country minivan. What's surprising is which cars.





BMWs, Mercedes, Acuras, Jaguars, Lincolns, Cadillacs, some interesting cars are being traded in for the Chrysler Town & Country minivan. For some interesting reasons. One is the Town & Country's high level of luxury and safety: leather-trimmed quad seating, 10-speaker Infinity Sound System, dual air bags,* four-wheel ABS, 3.8-liter V-6 and available all-wheel drive. Another reason is its sheer practicality. You get seating for seven, and when you don't need that, just remove the rear seats and you'll have more cargo space than any conventional station wagon on the market. But perhaps the most important reason people accustomed to great cars enjoy the Town & Country is because it handles like a great car itself. One test drive and even the most discerning luxury car owners realize they don't have to compromise anything to own a vehicle that's stunningly practical. Least of all, their standards.

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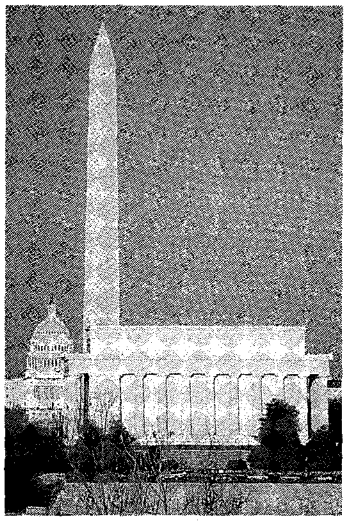

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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST—Disney's Broadway money-spinner, adapted from the animated-film version, calls itself a musical, but it is really an American cousin of an English genre—the pantomime, which traditionally retells fairy tales with jokes, slapstick, song, and double-entendre. At its best, "Beauty and the Beast" has a few moments of solid-gold theatrical amazement: the showstopping "Be Our Guest" production number, in which cutlery, kitchen utensils, and plates camp it up, and the Beast's transformation into the Prince at the finale. But the director, Robert Jess Roth, rarely rises above the pedestrian. With Susan Egan, Terrence Mann, Tom Bosley, Gary Beach, Heath Lamberts, Burke Moses, and Beth Fowler. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/2/94.) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100.)

THE BEST LITTLE WHOREHOUSE GOES PUBLIC—Dee Hoty and Scott Holmes co-star in this sequel to "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas." (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

BLOWN SIDEWAYS THROUGH LIFE—In her sixty-fifth job, Claudia Shear charmingly and observantly tells us about her previous sixty-four, which have ranged from working in a hardware store to being a "phone girl" at a whorehouse, with a stint as a Bloomingdale's cosmetics salesgirl thrown in. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2285.)

BROKEN GLASS—In the story of a woman's sudden hysterical paralysis late in her long, devoted marriage to a go-getting Jewish businessman, Arthur Miller has found a metaphor for the cycle of blame that seems to have stalemated modern life. This short, discursive, but compelling play features strong performances by Amy Irving, Ron Rifkin, David Dukes, and George N. Martin. John Tillinger directed. (5/9/94) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

BROTHERS OF THE BRUSH—This first effort by Jimmy Murphy, a Dublin housepainter turned playwright, concerns the mutual suspicion among three housepainters in Dublin and the penny-pinching contractor they work for. The theme is the destructiveness of the every-man-for-himself ethos, but there's plenty of comic byplay to leaven the proceedings. With Ronan Carr, Paul Mc Grane, Paul Ronan, and Mickey Kelly; directed by Nye Heron. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318. Closes May 22.)

CAROUSEL—Nicholas Hytner's authoritative direction combines with Bob Crowley's inspired sets to transplant the National Theatre's 1993 smash hit onto the Vivian Beaumont stage. Bold, beautiful, and controversial, this multicultural reinterpretation launches Rodgers and Hammerstein toward the twenty-first century. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

CHRISTINA ALBERTA'S FATHER—A new musical by Polly Pen, based on a 1925 novel by H. G. Wells. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

DAMN YANKEES—The big musical hit of 1955 is back, in its first Broadway revival, with Victor Garber as the Devil and Bebe Neuwirth as Lola. George Abbott and Douglass Wallop's book has been jarringly updated by the director, Jack O'Brien (with the help of the hundred-and-six-year-old Mr. Abbott). The result is a vehicle that swerves between fifties stodginess and nineties cynicism. But the cast delivers Richard Adler and Jerry Ross's music with sporty energy, and Rob Marshall has created some lively dance numbers. (4/4/94) (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE—The initial offerings in the 1994 one-act-play marathon are "Extensions," by Murray Schisgal; "The Falling Man," by Will Scheffer; "I'm with Ya, Duke," by Herb Gardner; and "Paradise," by Romulus Linney. Series A runs through May 15; the marathon continues through June 12. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-3405.)

FAMILY SECRETS—Sherry Glaser is the sole, physically adept, very funny performer in this comedy about a Jewish family, which she wrote with Greg Howells. (Westside Theatre, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

FOUR DOGS AND A BONE—The "bone" of John Patrick Shanley's satiric comedy is a movie, and the "four dogs" are its producer, writer, and two actresses, who together make the funniest foursome in town. With Ann Magnuson, Arabella Field, Reg Rogers, and Grant Shaud. (11/15/93) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

HIDE YOUR LOVE AWAY: THE BALLAD OF BRIAN EPSTEIN—Kevin Scott's play about the Beatles' manager takes place in 196[illegible] (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

AN INSPECTOR CALLS—J. B. Priestley's mystery thriller, with Rosemary Harris, Kenneth Cranham, and Philip Bosco. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

JACKIE MASON: POLITICALLY INCORRECT—A former rabbi from a family of rabbis, Mason uses the stage as his bully pulpit. Behind his shtick, which is sometimes vulgar but always funny, is a fundamentalist disgust at the world's fraud, wickedness, hypocrisy, and inhumanity. (4/25/94) (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

JOSEPH AND THE AMAZING TECHNICOLOR DREAMCOAT—A considerably pumped-up version of Andrew Lloyd Webber's first musical, with former soap star Michael Damian in the title role. The Bible was never like this. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100. Closes May 29.)

LAUGHTER ON THE 23RD FLOOR—Neil Simon's twenty-seventh Broadway play, about a group of writers for a fictionalized version of "Your Show of Shows," is one of his finest comic efforts. Directed by Jerry Zaks, with Mark Linn-Baker, Lewis J. Stadlen, Nathan Lane, Ron Orbach, John Slattery, and J. K. Simmons. (12/20/93) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

MEDEA—Diana Rigg gives a magnetic performance in this production of Euripides' tragedy, an import from London's Almeida Theatre, under the direction of Jonathan Kent. She embodies the concept of deadly wit—in her hands, words are weapons, and she wields them with murderous mastery. Her verbal command is such that at times it obscures the grief that drives her to commit her horrendous acts, but there's a thrilling electrical charge whenever Rigg is onstage, and grief and horror are powerfully conveyed by Peter J. Davison's set, which is so dramatic that it functions as a main character. With Tim Oliver Woodward as Jason, Janet Henfrey, John Turner, and Donald Douglas. (4/25/94) (Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

MOONSHOT AND COSMOS—Two one-acts by Lanford Wilson. (Circle Repertory Company, 99 Seventh Ave. S. 239-6200. Closes May 29.)

MORT SAHL'S AMERICA—One of the innovative funnymen of the fifties and sixties, Mort Sahl is sharply intelligent but too witty to be vulgar, and this is too bad. His gig is more a series of cocktail-party set pieces than a show, but he performs it with enormous laid-back charm. (4/25/94) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 239-6200.)

MOVIELAND—In Everett Quinton's latest outing, Mr. Q. plays a character called Ruby Stevens (attention, non-campers: that's Barbara Stanwyck's real name), who frenetically acts out parts in half a dozen old movies, including "The Spiral Staircase," "The Ten Commandments," and "Madame X" ("the blondest movie ever made"), in an attempt to placate a dragon that's threatening her life. You have to admire Ruby's resourcefulness in using a Clorox bottle as Pharaonic headgear, but the dragon has a point. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271.)

Passion—Stephen Sondheim's new musical, with a book by James Lapine, who also directed. Donna Murphy, Jere Shea, and Marin Mazzie lead the cast. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Picnic—In William Inge's 1953 play, a man with a past barrels into a small Kansas town on Labor Day, bringing the promise of emotional danger and sex to the women who live there. Scott Ellis's production is set in the thirties, and though the leads, played by Ashley Judd and Kyle Chandler, are disappointing, most of the other actors—including Anne Pitoniak, Polly Holliday, Larry Bryggman, Angela Goethals, Tate Donovan, and that paragon of pizzazz Debra Monk—work beautifully together to call up Inge's poignant small-town world. William Ivey Long's costumes and Tony Walton's set help evoke the long-ago-and-far-away atmosphere of a Thomas Hart Benton painting. (5/2/94) (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400. Closes May 29.)

Ricky Jay & His 52 Assistants—With a Mephistophelean smoothness, the master sleight-of-hand artist discourses on the history of trickery and performs illusions that will amaze even those who wouldn't normally go out of their way to see card tricks. Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103. Closes May 28.)

Sally Marr . . . and Her Escorts—Joan Rivers stars in a play about the mother of Lenny Bruce. Written by Ms. Rivers, Erin Sanders, and Lonny Price. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

Shaker Heights—A comedy by Quincy Long. (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-1242.)

She Loves Me—The Roundabout's production of the 1963 Bock-Harnick-Masteroff musical. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

Stomp—A group of eight British rhythm specialists who use unconventional percussion instruments. The noise is terrific. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Three Tall Women—A moving, poetic play by Edward Albee. Myra Carter, Marian Seldes, and Jordan Baker represent three generations of women trying to sort out their pasts. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992—Anna Deavere Smith's one-woman show, seen recently at the Public Theatre. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Wilderness—A drama by the Chinese playwright Cao Yu, presented by the Pan Asian Repertory Theatre. (Playhouse 46, 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660. Closes May 28.)

LONG RUNS

Angels in America: "Millennium Approaches" and "Perestroika." (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.) . . . **Blood Brothers:** Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **Blue Man Group/Tubes:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **Cats:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **Crazy for You:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **The Fantasticks:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **Forever Plaid:** Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400. . . . **Guys and Dolls:** Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **Kiss of the Spider Woman:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **Les Misérables:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **Miss Saigon:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **Nunsense:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321. . . . **Perfect Crime:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **The Phantom of the Opera:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **The Sisters Rosensweig:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. . . . **Tony n' Tina's Wedding:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **The Who's Tommy:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Public Theatre—Presenting two performance works in rotating repertory: "All for You," by John Fleck (through May 15), and "Airport Music," by Jessica Hagedorn and Han Ong (through May 14). (425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Meredith Monk—Performing "Volcano Songs," a music/dance/vocal work in progress. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. May 11-15 at 7:30.)

Deluxe—A new show by Bob & Bob. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Spring St. 647-0202. May 12 at 10:30.)

DANCE

New York City Ballet—May 11 at 8: "Fanfare," "Songs of the Auvergne," and "Who Cares?" . . . ¶ May 12 at 8: "Apollo," "Mozartiana," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ May 13 at 8: "Fanfare," "Suite of Dances," "Dances at a Gathering," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ May 14 at 2: "Ballo della Regina," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ May 14 at 8: "Le Tombeau de Couperin," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "Dances at a Gathering," and "I'm Old Fashioned." . . . ¶ May 15 at 1: "Apollo," "Valse Triste," "Haieff Divertimento," and "Who Cares?" . . . ¶ May 15 at 7: "Le Tombeau de Couperin," "Sylvia Pas de Deux," "Songs of the Auvergne," and "Symphony in C." . . . ¶ May 17 at 8: "Le Tombeau de Couperin," "Fancy Free," and "Brahms-Schoenberg Quartet." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 26.)

American Ballet Theatre—May 11 at 2: "Cruel World," "The Red Shoes," and "Etudes." . . . ¶ May 11 at 8: "Airs," "Cruel World," and "The Red Shoes." . . . ¶ May 12 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Airs," and "Etudes." . . . ¶ May 13 and May 16-17 at 8, and May 14 at 2 and 8: "Manon." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through June 4.)

Urban Bush Women—A group of musicians and dancers who explore contemporary and ancestral African themes. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 11-14 at 8, and May 15 at 2 and 7:30.)

Compañía Nacional de Danza—A Spanish modern-ballet troupe in its United States début. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. May 11-13 at 8, May 14 at 2 and 8, and May 15 at 3.)

"Duets!"—The first in a series of dance-related performance works. (Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Battery Park City. May 11 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

"Diablo"—The opening performance of a flamenco drama, with José Greco II and six dancers. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. May 17 at 8. Through May 29.)

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NIGHT LIFE

Pure Piaf

It seems de rigueur for the the American début of a European chanteuse to be accompanied by publicity asserting that she has inherited the mantle of Dietrich or Piaf. Only one singer in recent memory has made good on the claim: Ingrid Caven, whose shows last year at the Ballroom suggested a genuine line of succession from Dietrich. Now, with no hype whatever, the Ballroom is presenting another authentic cabaret creature, in this case a descendant of Piaf. It's a *chanteur* named Michel Hermon, a classically trained French singer who has spent the past fifteen years delving into the Piaf canon. With the accordionist Gérard Barreaux, he has just embarked on a two-week engagement, reprising a program that recently had a three-week run at the Théâtre des Bouffes-du-Nord, in Paris.

Hermon grew up hating Piaf, but, he says, "when you're twenty, when you're in love, you start to listen differently." It was, in fact, a performance by Ingrid Caven that inspired the no-frills spirit of his current "recital" (as he calls it), which focusses on the theatricality of the songs. Some Piaf standards are included—"La Vie en Rose," "L'Accordéoniste"—but he also explores more obscure items, his vocal style ranging from something that shows off his classical training to rasping, Piafesque cries that hover on the brink of breakdown. You could prepare by listening to the magnificent ten-CD Piaf retrospective that EMI France issued late last year, or you could let Hermon and Barreaux provide your first exposure to some of these songs, and regret *rien*.

CONCERTS

Thomas Buckner—The singer and his colleagues will perform works for pure-wave oscillators and interactive electronics, as well as the première of "Dreaming the World," by Sorrel Hays. Many a youngster has made a musical instrument by threading a string through a button, doubling it back through another hole, and spinning it; Ms. Hays magnifies the concept, with Frisbees on twenty-foot-long cords. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. May 12 at 8.)

David Murray and Dave Burrell—Murray, on saxophone, makes beautiful music with Burrell, on piano. A pithy player with a penchant for ragtime and gospel, Burrell curbs Murray's garrulousness and broadens his historical overview. (Prospect Park Picnic House, Prospect Park W. at 3rd St., Brooklyn. May 15 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Loreena McKennitt—Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. May 12 at 8.

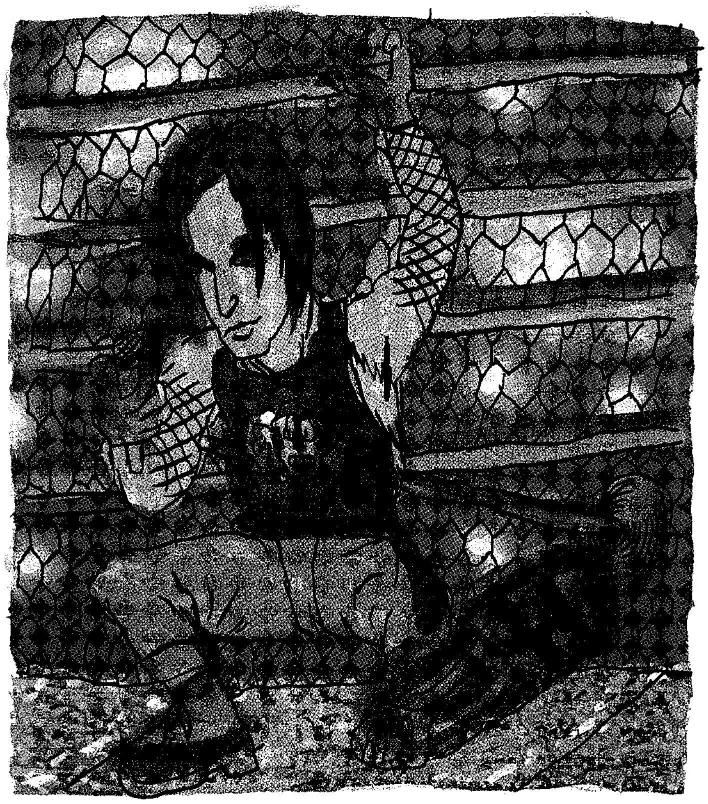
"The Brian Woodbury Songbook"—A group of singers and actors perform songs (some of them staged) by Mr. Woodbury. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. May 12-14 at 10.)

Lavender Light—The Black and People of All Colors Lesbian and Gay Gospel Choir. (Tribeca Performing Arts Center, 199 Chambers St. 346-8510. May 14 at 8.)

"Jazz and Blues Legacy: Louis Armstrong and W. C. Handy"—A concert featuring Sandra Reaves and Arvell Shaw & the Louis Armstrong Legacy Band. (Majestic Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 1-718 636-4100. May 14 at 8.)

Angela Bofill—Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. May 14 at 8.

Sultan Khan and Zakir Hussain—Performing instrumental music of North India. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. May 15 at 7:30.)



Trent Reznor of Nine Inch Nails, at Webster Hall.

GARY PANTER

ROCK AND FOLK

Academy, 234 W. 43rd St.—In the heart of the theatre district, a haven for those whose musical tastes run left of "Tommy." **CRACKER** is here on May 13, with guests the **MEAT PUPPETS.** Cracker's David Lowery, who served his apprenticeship with the California band Camper Van Beethoven in the late eighties, has a great voice for modern rock: it often sounds a little cracked and tired, and yet Lowery can sneer and moan with the best. After Camper broke up, Lowery hooked up with country guitarist Johnny Hickman and found the perfect muscular twang to carry his songs and drive home his world-weary vision of adventure and twisted fun. Cracker's second record, "Kerosene Hat," was released last summer, and has slowly become a hit. It has the same disreputable, offhand grace that messed up albums like "Exile On Main Street" and "London Calling"—a rock marriage of debauchery and beauty. **INFECTIOUS GROOVES,** a punk-funk quartet from L.A., arrives on May 17. For concert information, call 249-8870.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Decent sight lines, great greasy food, prodigiously talented waitresses, and a consistent roster of high-quality acts. On May 12: **FREEDY JOHNSTON,** with **CINDY LEE BERRYHILL.** Johnston is a young singer-songwriter from Kansas who has already produced a remarkable batch of tough, literate, and haunting songs. He brings a country-punk spirit to the business of making folk-rock music, and he has a shot at attracting the kind of intelligent audience that Mary-Chapin Carpenter has built for herself. His version of "Wichita Lineman" is something else: you can tell that this is a guy who's actually been to Wichita. May 14: **JOHN TRUDELL,** a provocative Santee Sioux spoken-word artist, will present his riveting Native American-style poetry and rap. Songwriter **RICHARD BARONE** (formerly of the Bongos) is also on the bill.

Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—A small peach-walled storefront, Sin-é is usually given over to a young, earthy crowd that drinks Rolling Rock or espresso and waits for some Irish musician or other to blow in and play a set.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—Rock and roll always sounds best in a dump, which may be why this legendary club is still thriving. **MATERIAL ISSUE** brings its clever, catchy guitar-pop to the club on May 11. . . . ¶ The club is now flanked by a bar and performance space called CB's Gallery. May 12: A double bill of downtown genre-bending, with **DADADAH** (an electro-orchestral nontet) and the **BOSTON ART QUARTET.** Guitarist **BYRON ESTEP** plays on May 14.

Don Hill's, 511 Greenwich St., at Spring St. (334-1390)—Former Soft Cell vocalist **MARC ALMOND** drops by on May 13.

Grand, 76 E. 13th St. (777-0600)—A serious room for serious rock-and-rolling, with a wall-o'-speakers up front and an ear-decompression lounge around the bar in the back. "Skampilation '94" hits the club on May 14-15. On the first night, **MEPHISKAPHÉLES** and the **NEW YORK CITIZENS** headline a roster of hardcore types; the following evening, the **SCOFFLAWS** and **SKA VOOVIE** top the bill.

Irving Plaza, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. **D GENERATION** is in on May 13, with guests Jack Black and Clowns for Progress. **LUNA** appears on May 14. . . . ¶ The Swing Dance Society gathers here every Sunday night, at the Continental Club. The dancers all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

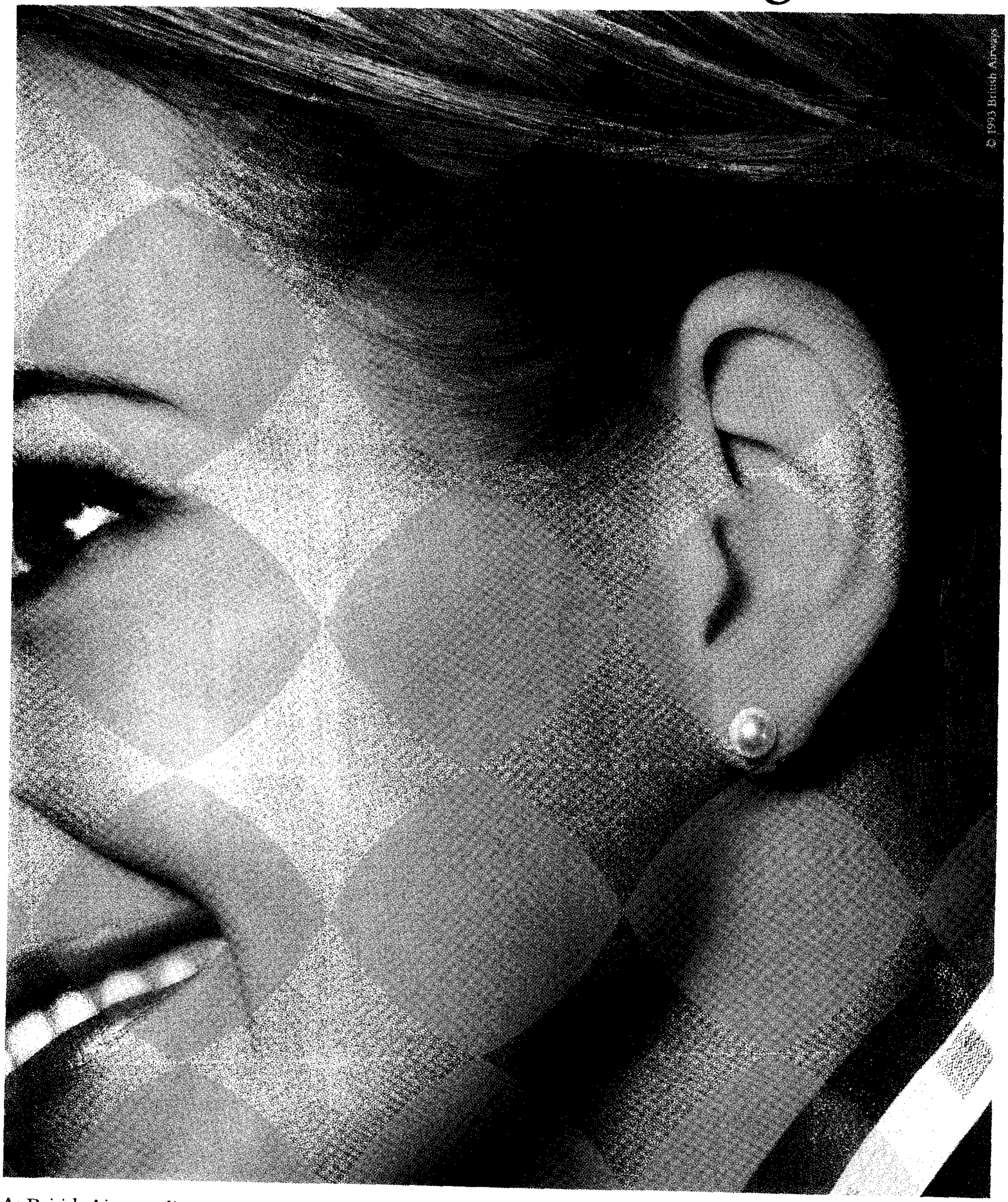
Limelight, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—A church turned eighties hot spot, this unholy venue currently plays host to a vari[illegible] of techno and alternative acts. May 12: The **SUGARHILL GANG** performs. May 17: A benefit featuring **EMERGENCY BROADCAST NETWORK.**

Ludlow Street Café, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—An unassuming basement restaurant-bar, where you can drink cheap and catch live music nightly. Mondays belong to **BEAT RODEO,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—The Upper East Side Blues. The **ROXY PERRY** band drops in on May 14.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A Hoboken landmark. Alternative popsters **VERSUS** and **KICKING GIANT** stop by on May 12.

One of the most sensitive instruments aboard our flight.



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NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

Paddy Reilly's Music Bar, 495 Second Ave., at 28th St. (686-1210)—**BLACK 47** usually plays on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights. When there's no live music, the jukebox blasts everything from the Chieftains to Greg Trooper to Paddy Reilly, the Irish folksinger who owns the place.

Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. (247-0200)—Ballroom dancing on Thursdays and Sundays. The rest of the week: another dark, sweaty rock club, with flannel-clad stage divers and the occasional whirling mosh pit. On May 13: "Zoostock," an eclectic evening of pop to benefit the Environmental Defense Fund. Performers include the raspy-voiced folk-rocker **MELISSA ETHERIDGE,** the canny, kitschy power-punk trio **URGE OVERKILL,** and those skinny-tie-era relics the **KNACK,** who can credit their revival as a New-Wave novelty act to whoever put "My Sharona" on the soundtrack of "Reality Bites." Additional guests are likely to have been announced by the time you read this.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—A broad, spacious, and agreeable club, near what was once called Ladies' Mile but might now be termed the pool-hall district. May 13: An evening with **URBAN BLIGHT. LOUP GAROU** is in on May 14, with the **ZYDECO HURRICANES** and **IRENE & THE MIKES.**

Webster Hall, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—**NINE INCH NAILS** arrives on May 13. Trent Reznor is to Nine Inch Nails what Karl Wallinger is to World Party: front man, songwriter, producer, arranger—a one-man band, in effect. What sets Reznor's work apart is his magnificently hellish misanthropy and his daring mastery of electronic effects. He uses drum machines and MIDI keyboards to evoke disgust, lust, and despair. On Nine Inch Nails' latest effort, "The Downward Spiral," Reznor, with the help of a few human friends (including guitarist Adrian Belew), continues to craft cyberpunk ditties that haunt, amuse, and devastate.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—A warehouse complex for neo-hippies and other party animals. **ANI DI FRANCO** performs on May 15. This Buffalo-born singer-songwriter (whose first name rhymes with "bonny") has just released a new album, "Out of Range," on her own Righteous Babe label. DiFranco's songs and her singing are righteous indeed, boldly addressing a variety of social and sexual issues, in an authoritative voice.

JAZZ AND BLUES

A.K.A, 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—Jazz, hip-hop, and world beat meet in this small, velvet-draped club. There's a long, elegant bar with enough seats to accommodate the few non-dancers; it can be a tight squeeze, but it's a svelte crowd. May 14: **MILO Z.** entertains. On May 15, the club celebrates its first anniversary, with a lineup of special guests.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and John Parker, weekends to the Freddy Francis trio, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—This northern restaurant-bar, an airy two-tiered space with pastel walls and potted greenery, is a shade too slick for Columbia students but just right for post-collegiate jazz fans. The name is taken from the long-gone midtown pleasure dome that featured Bird himself. The **BENNY SALZANO** quintet is here on May 13-14, featuring **RON CARTER.** Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Jazz, mirrors, and a gift shop. Through May 15: the **CHARLES LLOYD** quintet, and **BOBBY WATSON & HORIZON.** Lloyd, every hippie's favorite tenor saxophonist, has unfortunately failed to maintain the crossover audience he cultivated during the sixties. He's still guilty of some head-in-the-clouds posturing, but when he comes down to earth he can be entrancing. Watson is the Cannonball Adderley of his day, an exemplary alto-sax player and canny bandleader who revels in the pleasures of connecting with a crowd. **TANIA MARIA** starts on May 17. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—On any given night, and well into the morning, one or another of New York's many formidable pianists can be found here, shoehorned into a corner with the resplendent Baldwin that Paul Desmond bequeathed to the late Bradley Cunningham. **JOHN HICKS** and **LARRY WILLIS** continue through May 14. Hicks and Willis are a perfect pairing for piano duets; both are florid, bop-based modernists who aren't shy about flaunting their skills. Dining.

The Cooler, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—Deep in the heart of the meat district, an authentic old locker has been converted into a comfortable, banquette-lined paradise. Thursday nights belong to **GIANT STEP,** a roving collective of musicians, rappers, and d.j.s who mix jazz, funk, and hip-hop.

Down Beat, 101 Seventh Ave. S. (620-4000)—A warm, wood-panelled room with upholstered banquettes, a nicely appointed bar, and a reliable roster of jazz names. Murals of Diz, Bird, and Basie adorn the walls, so the players are always in good company.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—The seating arrangement in this basement makes flying coach seem roomy; nevertheless, it's one of the city's top jazz spots—thanks largely to the club's talent bookers. But watch your head. Alto saxophonist **CHARLES MC PHERSON** is here through May 15. McPherson has called the West Coast home for decades now, but he hasn't gone cool on us yet. With a steaming rhythm section behind him, McPherson can still conjure up the intensity of his classic early-sixties albums for Prestige. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL** leads a trio. Dining.

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—A comfortable neo-Moroccan bar and lounge, hidden inside the Time Café, with satin couches and mosaic tables. The downstairs room, where bands perform, is rather plain in comparison, but still a sleek and comfortable spot to take in a show. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday; on Mondays, **GUITARS PLAY MINGUS.** Dining.

Judys', 49 W. 44th St. (764-8930)—An intimate, burgundy-walled *boîte* attached to the Iroquois Hotel. In the front room, which is decorated with photos of famous Judys—and of the famous daughter of a famous Judy—a pianist keeps the happy-hour bar birds happy. Vocalists work out in the dining room. **LYNDA JAMISON** is here on May 13-14. Closed Sundays.

RECORD STORE ARRIVALS

A highly selective list of new releases we're curious to hear.

JOHNNY CASH, "American Recordings" (American).

THE PRETENDERS, "Last of the Independents" (Sire).

ADRIAN BELEW, "Here" (Caroline).

THE LONDON SUEDE, "Stay Together" (Columbia).

JOHNNY COPELAND, "Catch Up with the Blues" (Verve).

"RARE ON AIR: COLLECTIONS FROM KCRW-FM ON-AIR PERFORMANCES" (Mammoth).

SONIC YOUTH, "Experimental Jet Set, Trash and No Star" (Geffen).

PAUL WELLER, "Wild Wood" (London).

INDIGO GIRLS, "Swamp Ophelia" (Epic).

THE SMITHEREENS, "A Date with the Smithereens" (RCA).

JOHN GORKA, "Out of the Valley" (Windham Hill).

NAS, "Illmatic" (Columbia).

RANDY TRAVIS, "This Is Me" (Warner Bros.).

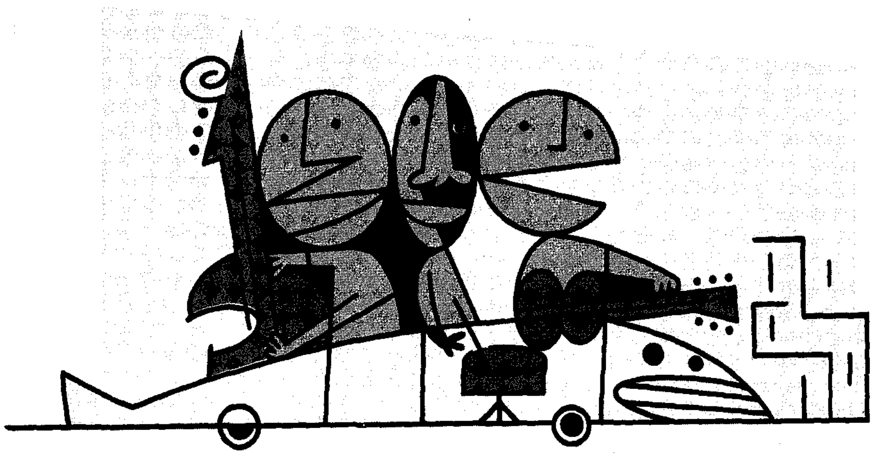
REBA McENTIRE, "Read My Mind" (MCA).

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—This club, run by a couple of forward-looking Wisconsinites, specializes in all manner of neo-this and post-that ensembles. The atmosphere is low-key, low-budget bohemian. The **TURTLE ISLAND STRING QUARTET,** who reinterpret the music of Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, Thelonious Monk, and Jimi Hendrix on their latest album, "Who Do We Think We Are?," drop by on May 12-13. Tenor-sax titan **DAVID MURRAY** takes over on May 14-15.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Woody Allen continues his night job as clarinet player in the **NEW ORLEANS FUNERAL AND RAGTIME ORCHESTRA,** a Dixieland-jazz ensemble now in its twentieth year. The rest of the week, **VERNEL BAGNERIS** presents "Hoo-Dude," his tribute to Jelly Roll Morton. Closed Sundays.

Metropolis, 31 Union Square W. (675-2300)—The basement of this swank café is now hosting a series of high-profile gigs. The **MILT HINTON** trio drops in on May 13-14.

Sounds of Brazil, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif, dedicated to calypso, reggae, and bossa nova. **GIL SCOTT-HERON** returns on May 11-12. In the seventies, while many of his peers were blissfully succumbing to disco fever, the singer-pianist (who's also a poet and novelist) was



J.D.KING

fusing jazz-funk textures with sobering political commentary. Now that socially conscious hip-hop artists have entered the pop charts en masse, one hopes that Scott-Heron's potent new album (his first in twelve years), "Spirits," will introduce him to a larger audience. Closed Sundays. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A jazz outpost where the musicians are always top-shelf. **LESTER BOWIE'S BRASS FANTASY** continues through May 14. As its name implies, Bowie's outfit is chock-full of trumpets and trombones—there's even a tuba to hold down the bottom. This aggregate doesn't delve into experimental territory with the same frequency as Bowie's main band, the Art Ensemble of Chicago, but their skewed and exuberant versions of both original and pop material balance provocation with fun. A big band belonging to **GIL GOLDSTEIN** is in action on Mondays. **KENNY GARRETT** begins an engagement on May 17. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—This legendary tourist haven makes serious jazz fans welcome in the Chestnut Room. It resembles a hunting lodge and is every bit as over the top as the rest of the establishment, but the bookings are impressive. **HOUSTON PERSON** and **ETTA JONES** continue through May 15. Beginning May 17: **DICK HYMAN.**

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The world's most famous jazz club is also the last place in town that still looks, feels, and smells like a classic jazz club—subterranean, smoky, and thick with the spirits of past masters. **EASTERN REBELLION** performs though May 15. The **CRAIG HANDY** quartet begins on May 17. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—A tiny, low-key supper club where the jazz, like the Spanish-American cuisine, can take on a spicy, multi-cultural flavor. Trumpeter **TIM HAGANS** appears through May 14. Judging from his recent CD, "No Words," one suspects that Hagans isn't afraid to throw a little of everything—straight-ahead jazz, free jazz, funk—into the pot. He's been heard with everyone from Woody Herman to Joe Lovano and the Yellowjackets. Two similarly open-minded players, guitarist John Abercrombie and pianist Marc Copland, are his guests for this gig.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—One of those snazzy eateries you've seen nestled amid brownstones in the Village and wondered about. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. Pianist **BILL MAYS,** bassist **MICHAEL MOORE,** and saxophonist **BOB KINDRED** are in May 9-14. This trio weds melodicism to open-eared interplay, taking refinement to the third power and making old standards shine like new.

STANDARDS AND CABARET

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Midway through her spring fling in the Oak Room, **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** has embarked on an Irving Berlin tribute, mixing some rarely heard early pieces with such classics as "Cheek to Cheek" and "Say It Isn't So." Dining.

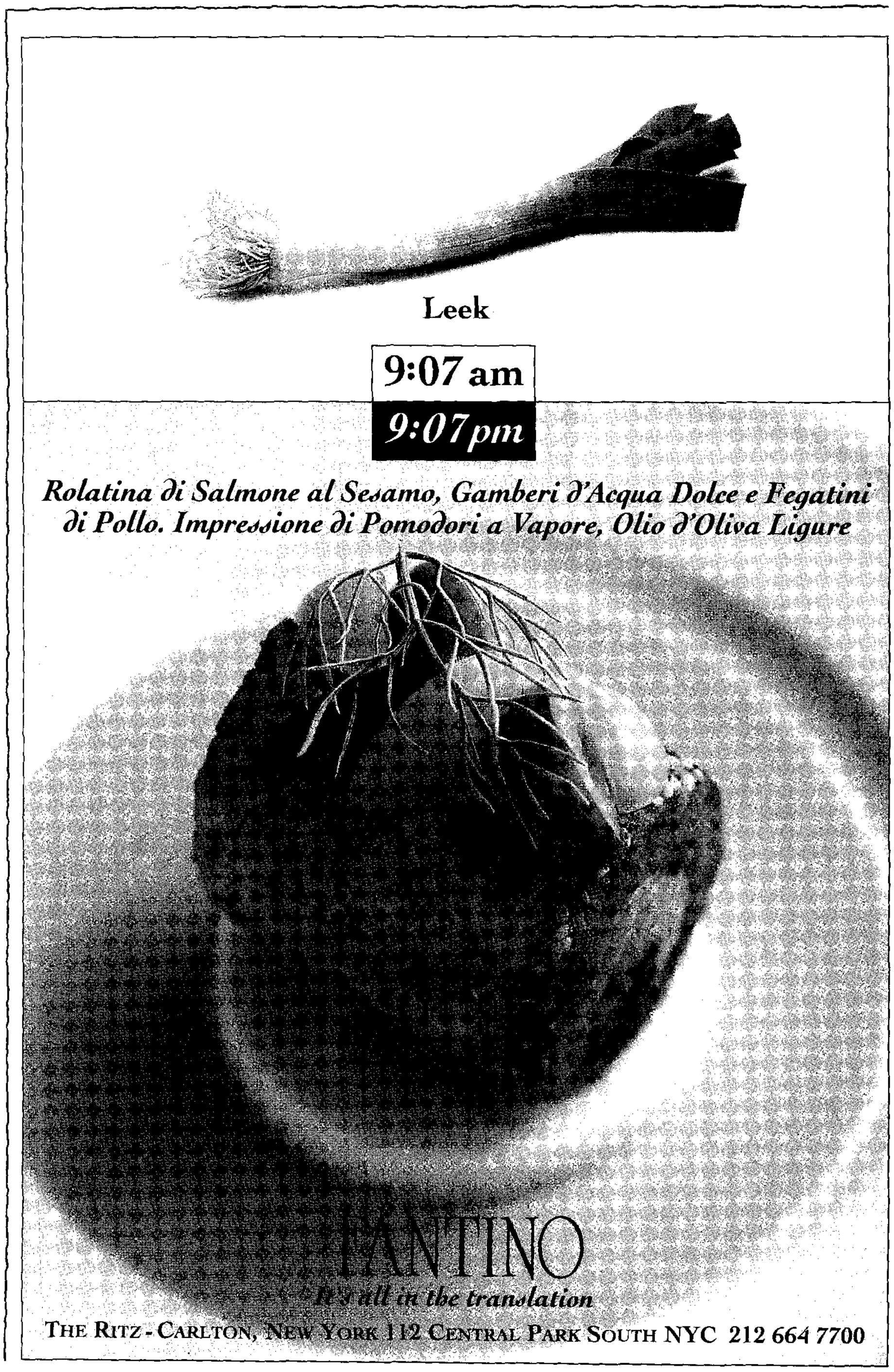
Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A cool green music hall that features a steady stream of international pop and cabaret stars, as well as the occasional drag queen. The Ballroom is also a tapas restaurant—if you haven't had dinner, you may never make it to the show. Singer **MICHEL HERMON** and accordionist **GÉRARD BARREAUX** continue this week, with a Piaf-inspired program. Cabaret legend **BLOSSOM DEARIE** presents an early show (6:30) on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, once again, right as rain, the fabulous **BOBBY SHORT.** Time has not diminished the tasteful virtuosity of Short's ivory-tickling, nor deflated his gregarious wit as a singer and showman. Now in his twenty-seventh year at the Carlyle, Short continues to give the royal treatment to songs by Gershwin, Ellington, Arlen, Berlin, and, of course, Cole Porter. A de-lightful, de-lovely evening, and a quintessentially New York experience. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar, **BARBARA CARROLL** presides at the piano.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. **MARY CLEERE HARAN** continues through May 28. Her show, called "An Affair to Remember: Movie Music from the Fabulous Fifties," brings back a time when, according to the velvet-voiced chanteuse, "the whole world was younger and stupider." A graceful performer and a delightfully intelligent raconteur, Haran peppers her set of steamy gems by Mercer, Porter, and Gershwin with nifty impersonations (her Audrey Hepburn is especially good), encyclopedic references (she may be the only cabaret singer to mention Marilyn Monroe and Marcel Proust in the same sentence), and enough torch to start a four-alarm fire. With Bill Charlap on piano, David Finck ("the Robert Mitchum of the upright") on bass, and Dave Ratajczak on drums. Closed Mondays.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Upstairs, there's a small red, gold, and green cabaret. **JUDY ARGO** arrives on May 15. Dining.

Supper Club, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—A plush little nook with celestial wallpaper, far from the midtown racket. Every Wednesday, the club presents Havana Nights, an all-Latin evening. **RHONDA ROSS** (Diana's daughter) appears on May 13.


Leek

9:07 am

9:07pm

Rolatina di Salmone al Sesamo, Gamberi d'Acqua Dolce e Fegatini di Pollo. Impressione di Pomodori a Vapore, Olio d'Oliva Ligure

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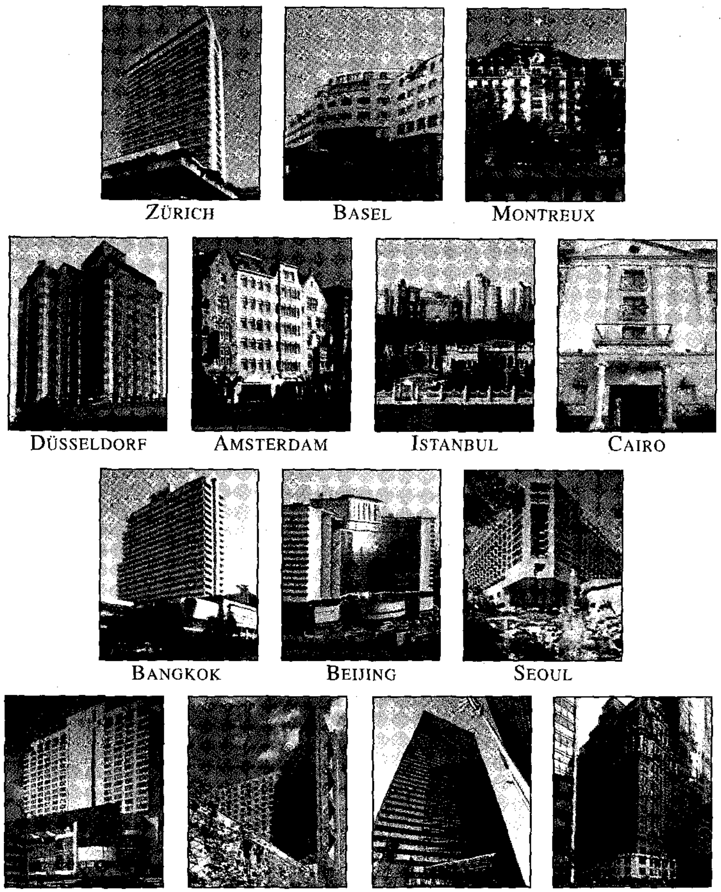
ART

Soft Geometry

As a codified representation of reality, geometry unites the music of the spheres and the grunge of the streets, and infects every warren of modern aesthetics, from the cerebral austerity of Mondrian to the eye-popping funk of Times Square and Las Vegas. Mary Heilmann tries to reimagine geometric abstraction for an era that has lost touch with the fervent idealism that animated the avant-garde prophets of pure form. In the effort, Heilmann has come up with some of the freshest twists on geometric painting of the past two decades. Her current show at the Pat Hearn Gallery (39 Wooster Street; through May 21), whimsically titled "Greatest Hits," is a mini-retrospective assembling a dozen sensuous and eccentric paintings.

Heilmann's paintings have a tactile quality, reflecting her early work as a ceramist and sculptor. She paints the edges as well as the surfaces of her canvases, which gives them a three-dimensional character. While in many of her paintings she adheres to the pictorial skeleton provided by the grid, she shakes it up, loosens it: the grids in "Little Nine by Nine" and "The First Vent" (both from 1972) buckle and sway. In Heilmann's hands, the abstract schemata of Mondrian and Malevich readmit the ghost of representation: her shapes allude to the most prosaic elements of domestic architecture and décor—radiator vents, casement windows, venetian blinds. It's a kind of soft geometry, responsive no less to the subtleties of feeling than to the particulars of form.



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MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"American Impressionism and Realism: The Painting of Modern Life, 1885-1915." John Singer Sargent and Mary Cassatt are included in the first major exhibition to pair these turn-of-the-century schools of painting and to focus on their similarities. . . . ¶ "Petrus Christus: Renaissance Master of Bruges." The Flemish painter Petrus Christus was long thought to be little more than a competent pupil of Jan van Eyck, but modern scholarship has reconstructed a career of the first rank. This exhibit contains twenty-seven works, three-quarters of Petrus's known œuvre. The come-hither "Portrait of a Lady," from Berlin, has the penetrating psychological analysis of a Holbein; the surrealistic fantasy of "Madonna of the Dry Tree," depicting a luminous Virgin and Child in a thorn tree hung with tiny golden "A"s (symbolizing the Ave Maria), recalls the sophisticated wit of Mantegna. This show, which has sneaked into the Lehman Wing, is a quiet little blockbuster. . . . ¶ Twenty-seven paintings by Sidney Nolan (1917-92), an Australian who chronicled the adventures of his countryman Ned Kelly, a nineteenth-century outlaw. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Projects: Karin Sander." Three large works, including a seventy-by-fifty-foot sculpture made of Astro-Turf. Through June 6. . . . ¶ "American Surrealist Photography" offers a heterogeneous assortment of forty-nine photographs from the permanent collection, some of which seem to have been smuggled in from outside the supposed theme. The truly surreal images—such as a 1933 photograph by James Thrall Soby depicting a female nude that turns out to be made of stone—really get to the heart of the matter. . . . ¶ "Three Masters of the Bauhaus: Lyonel Feininger, Wassily Kandinsky, and Paul Klee" comprises roughly seventy-five prints and illustrated books from the museum's collection. Through May 17. . . . ¶ Twenty-five years of Brooke Alexander Editions, which publishes prints and multiples of contemporary artists, including Richard Artschwager and Lorna Simpson. Through May 17. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"Women on the Edge: Twenty Photographers in Europe, 1919-39" provides an antidote to the many historical surveys that have overlooked women who contributed to this fertile, influential period in Europea[illegible] photography. Through June 1. (Open Su[illegible]days through Wednesdays, 10 to 6, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO, 575 Broadway—"Rolywholyover A Circus." John Cage (1912-92) took his title from Joyce's "Finnegans Wake" and used, among other things, a computerized version of the "I Ching" to create a circus. Cage said, "The basic idea is that the exhibition would change so much that if you came back a second time, you wouldn't recognize it." It includes a rotating exhibit of work by fifty artists, including Rauschenberg and Joseph Cornell; *enso* scrolls; interactive computer installations; an object each from the permanent collections of several New York museums; and a media room with a program that is always changing. For schedule information, call 423-3836. (There is a concurrent show of Cage's work at Sheehan Gallery.) (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 6, and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of more than two hundred paintings and works on paper by Joseph Stella (1877-1946), the American Futurist. . . . ¶ "Richard Avedon: Evidence 1944-94." A retrospective that includes the photographer's early unpublished work for *Life*, fashion shots for *Harper's Bazaar* and *Vogue*, several signature formal portraits, and a series of pictures done in the East Louisiana State Hospital, in February, 1963. Though the show has a decidedly informal air (there's no glass over the pictures, and several are just tacked to the wall or inside aluminum frames), its momentousness is underscored by the large scale of the photographs. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—The Lila Acheson Wallace Wing of Mammals and Their Extinct Relatives will open on May 14. The museum's extensive collection of mammalian fossils has been organized according to evolutionary history, beginning three hundred million years ago. It will enable humans to see, among other things, their direct relationship to bats. Seven murals by Charles R. Knight, three of which have been recently restored, flesh out the bones on display, providing full-color pictures of how some prehistoric creatures might have looked. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Louise Bourgeois: The Locus of Memory, Works 1982-93." An expanded version of the sculptor's 1993 Venice Biennale exhibit, with some twenty-five works made from Carrara marble, rubber, wood, bronze, steel, and glass. There are also thirty works on paper. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria, Queens—"Muky's New York: Photographer to the Postwar Film Renaissance," pictures taken between 1957 and 1982 by Muky Munkacsi for New York film productions. Included are studio portraits of Gary Cooper, Carmen Miranda, and other Hollywood stars. Opens May 14. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 4, and Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 6.)

China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—"Capturing a World: China and Its People—Photographs by John Thomson." Black-and-white photographs of temples, street gamblers, missionaries, and the Great Wall, taken some hundred and twenty years ago, by the Scottish explorer. Despite their age and the primitive collodion process used to develop them, the photographs capture the landscape and asceticism of post-dynasty China. Thomson's portraits of ornately dressed Manchu brides and prim, world-weary children are particularly striking. Through June 11. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—An 1826 porcelain jewel cabinet made at the Royal Manufactory of Sèvres will be on display starting May 17. The six-foot-tall cabinet has seventeen mahogany drawers. . . . ¶ "Packaging the New: Design and the American Consumer 1925-75." A trip down short-term-memory lane, documenting the rise of industrial designers, who became indispensable to the quenching of America's thirst for new products. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—"Japan: A Cartographic Vision, European Printed Maps from the Early Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Century." Some hundred and fifty maps and related material documenting European exploration and cartographers' renderings of the mysterious East. Through May 22. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History" chiefly uses documentary material—architectural models, designs, photographs, and video—to trace the development of these memorials in Europe, Israel, and the United States. . . . ¶ An exhibit of Israeli art from the museum's collection, notably "Kaddish," a series of eight etchings by Moshe Gershuni. Through May 15. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 to 5:45; Tuesdays, 11 to 8.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—"Treasures in Heaven: Armenian Illuminated Manuscripts." Selections include a tenth-century Gospel and items dating from the Armenian diaspora of the eighteenth century. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5; Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museum for African Art, 593 Broadway—"Fusion: West African Artists at the Venice Biennale." Paintings, sculptures, and drawings by Mor Faye and Moustapha Dimé, of Senegal, and Tamessir Dia, Ouattara, and Gérard Santoni, of the Ivory Coast, all of whom were in the 1993 Venice Biennale. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5:30; Saturdays, noon to 8; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"New York Beauties: Quilts from the Empire State." For the museum's New York Quilt Project, Quilt Days were held in various counties to locate, document, and preserve quilts. Of the approximately six thousand examples obtained, twenty-two are on view, the most flamboyant of which is a one-of-a-kind Teaching Quilt done by Elizabeth Hamilton in 1934. Animals, tools, fruits and vegetables, and the like, all in bright red, are stitched topsy-turvy on a white ground, with a boy and girl on a seesaw in the center and a border of letters and words. Elementary but pleasing. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11:30 to 7:30.)

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ART—Cont'd

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Artist's Eye: Wayne Thiebaud." The painter has selected more than fifty paintings from the Academy's collection. Fifteen of Thiebaud's own pictures are also on exhibit. (There is a concurrent show of Thiebaud's paintings at Stone Gallery.) (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5; Friday evenings until 8, with no admission charge after 5.)

Einat Peled

Quilts at the Museum of American Folk Art.

P.S. 1, 46-01 21st St., Long Island City—"Farewell to Bosnia: New Photographs by Gilles Peress." Through June 12. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Schomburg Center, 515 Lenox Ave., at 135th St.—"South Africa: The Cordoned Heart." Photo-essays on the working and living conditions of black South Africans.... ¶ Photographs of Nelson Mandela's June, 1990, visit to New York City. (Open Mondays through Wednesdays, noon to 8; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

South Street Seaport Museum, 12 Fulton St.—"Ship, Sea, and Sky: The Marine Art of James Edward Buttersworth." Sixty paintings by James Edward Buttersworth (1817-94), an English immigrant. (Open daily, 10 to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. The following listings lead off with new shows.)

Eric Avery and David Schorr—A duo exhibition. Avery's installation addresses the experience of being H.I.V.-positive; Schorr's cycle of paintings, works on paper, and a book all deal with those who have died of AIDS and those who mourn. Opens May 12. Through June 11. (Ryan, 24 W. 57th St.)

International Fine Art Fair—Paintings, drawings, and sculptures, from the Renaissance through Impressionism. (Seventh Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 67th St. May 13-16, from 11 to 8, and May 17, from 11 to 7.)

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Giorgio de Chirico (1888-1978)—Paintings and drawings, mostly from the late period of this great exponent of *pittura metafisica* and forerunner of Surrealism. De Chirico developed his characteristic motifs—faceless mannequins, empty plazas and streets, and sharp contrasts between a blazing Mediterranean sun and sepulchral shadows—in his early work. He abandoned metaphysical painting in favor of a truly awful neoclassicism, only to return to it, late in his life, as a form of self-parody. There are, however, a few marvellous early paintings here, like "The Delights of the Poet" (1913) and "The Greetings of a Distant Friend" (1916), which display the ominous pictorial poetry that entranced André Breton and the Surrealists. Through May 28. (Baldacci, 41 E. 57th St.)

Robert Graham—A cluster of patinated or oil-painted bronze statues of female nudes, by the sculptor of such public works as the Joe Louis monument in Detroit and the Olympic Gateway in Los Angeles. Despite their relatively small size, these figures have a heroic aspect, as Graham balances precise observation of the human form with all the charms of the idealized female nude. Through June 4. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St.)

John Stuart Ingle—A selection of crystalline watercolors from the consummate American realist. Ingle's trompe-l'oeil illusionism quietly dazzles. In "Still Life with Cantaloupe," he is clearly playing with his subjects, radically foreshortening a fruit knife and contrasting a red-and-white cellophane-wrapped peppermint with a slice of melon laid on waxed paper. His portraits, though they possess the same lush detail, are somewhat less lively. Through May 27. (Tatistcheff, 50 W. 57th St.)

John Moore—The isolation that modern architecture has bred is palpable in Moore's recent cityscapes, some of which are actually composites of urban and suburban scenes in two or more cities. A slightly vertiginous perspective—the backs of buildings are seen from slightly above—offers in one glance a look into the lighted windows of office buildings and homes, down darkening streets, and past factories, all glowing in the last light of dusk. The works create a feeling that is at once lonely and comforting. In "Two Boots," a man gazes out the window of a first-floor gallery, unaware that several stories above him, in the only lighted office, a woman in red is finishing her day's work. Through May 21. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 21 E. 70th St.)

Pat Adams—Enormous paintings, shaped works on paper, and monotypes, all with geometric elements. Through May 28. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

John Cage (1912-92)—"The First Meeting of the Satie Society," an installation and collaborative project devoted to Erik Satie and Marcel Duchamp. Cage wrote a mesostich (a poetic composition that can be read from side to side and from top to bottom), which was subsequently illustrated by Jasper Johns, Robert Ryman, Sol LeWitt, and others. (A concurrent Cage show is at the Guggenheim SoHo.) Through July 3. (Sheehan, 41 E. 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Richard Dadd (1817-86)—Based on loans from public and private collections, this artist's first show in America includes paintings and watercolors of fantasy figures and landscapes, and a series on the passions. Through June 3. (Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St.)

Alberto Giacometti (1901-66)—Sculptures and drawings from the artist's formative years in Paris (1922-30). Through June 11. (Yoshii, 20 W. 57th St.)

Cheryl Laemmle—Recent autobiographical paintings touching on family relationships. Through June 3. (Midtown Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Wayne Thiebaud—A mini-survey, including paintings of the artist's familiar edible subjects, such as ice cream and lollipops, as well as more recent San Francisco cityscapes. (A concurrent show is at the National Academy of Design.) Through June 30. (Stone, 15 E. 71st St.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Eileen Doman—Figurative paintings based on family photographs. Opens May 12. Through June 25. (Ricco/Maresca, 152 Wooster St.)

Marlene Dumas—Portraits and figurative paintings by a South African artist living in Amsterdam. Opens May 11. Through June 18. (Tilton, 49 Greene St.)

April Gornik—Charcoal and black pastel landscape drawings. Opens May 12. Through June 18. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Rémy Zaugg—Paintings of English text by a Swiss artist. Opens May 14. Through June 18. (Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St.)

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Grace Knowlton—Irregular spheres in welded copper, plaster, and tin, which appear to have tumbled from a rocky precipice. A closer look, however, suggests that they've been arranged just so on the gallery floor. Knowlton began creating perfectly shaped ceramic spheres in the seventies (when she was pregnant); over the past few years their shapes and surfaces have been getting dented, pierced, stitched, and patched. Through May 28. (M-13, at 72 Greene St.)

Lynn McCarty—Abstract oil paintings on Masonite. Larner's process is a time-consuming one, involving polishing, pouring, and repainting. The over-all impression is of an artist quietly going about her business, oblivious of the art market. The moods range from the dark atmosphere of "Distance," with its mossy-green and black shapes illuminated from behind, as if by headlights, to the airy clarity of "Twice," with its gray-blue cloud shape adrift on an eggshell-white ground. Through May 21. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Kenny Scharf—From the man who turned the whacked-out cartoon universe of his imagination into big business during the eighties come new paintings concerned with the environment. Scharf moved from New York to Miami in 1992 and found inspiration in the ocean and the area's wetland wildlife. The creatures that populate these nine Technicolor scenes, however, are not quite of this world: a shark with pink teeth and lush black eyelashes, jaded-looking waterfowl, bright purple and orange fish with human eyes and Mr. Limpet lips. The most realistic work, "Primodaire," features two pterodactyls in noble flight, looking far from endangered. Through May 27. (Shafrazi, 119 Wooster St.)

Dennis Adams—A body of sculptures titled "Trans/Actions." Through July 1. (Kent, 67 Prince St. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays.)

Elise Asher—Paintings with figurative imagery, based on the artist's poetry. Through May 31. (Kelly, 591 Broadway.)

Dara Birnbaum—"Hostage," a video installation. Through May 27. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Ross Bleckner—Paintings concerned with the effects of light; some are abstract and others contain such imagery as urns, birds, and clouds. Through June 25. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

George Condo—Surrealist paintings with mathematically based compositions. Through June 11. (Pace, 142 Greene St.)

Beauford Delaney (1901-79)—Paintings done in New York from 1929 to 1953. Through May 28. (Briet, 558 Broadway.)

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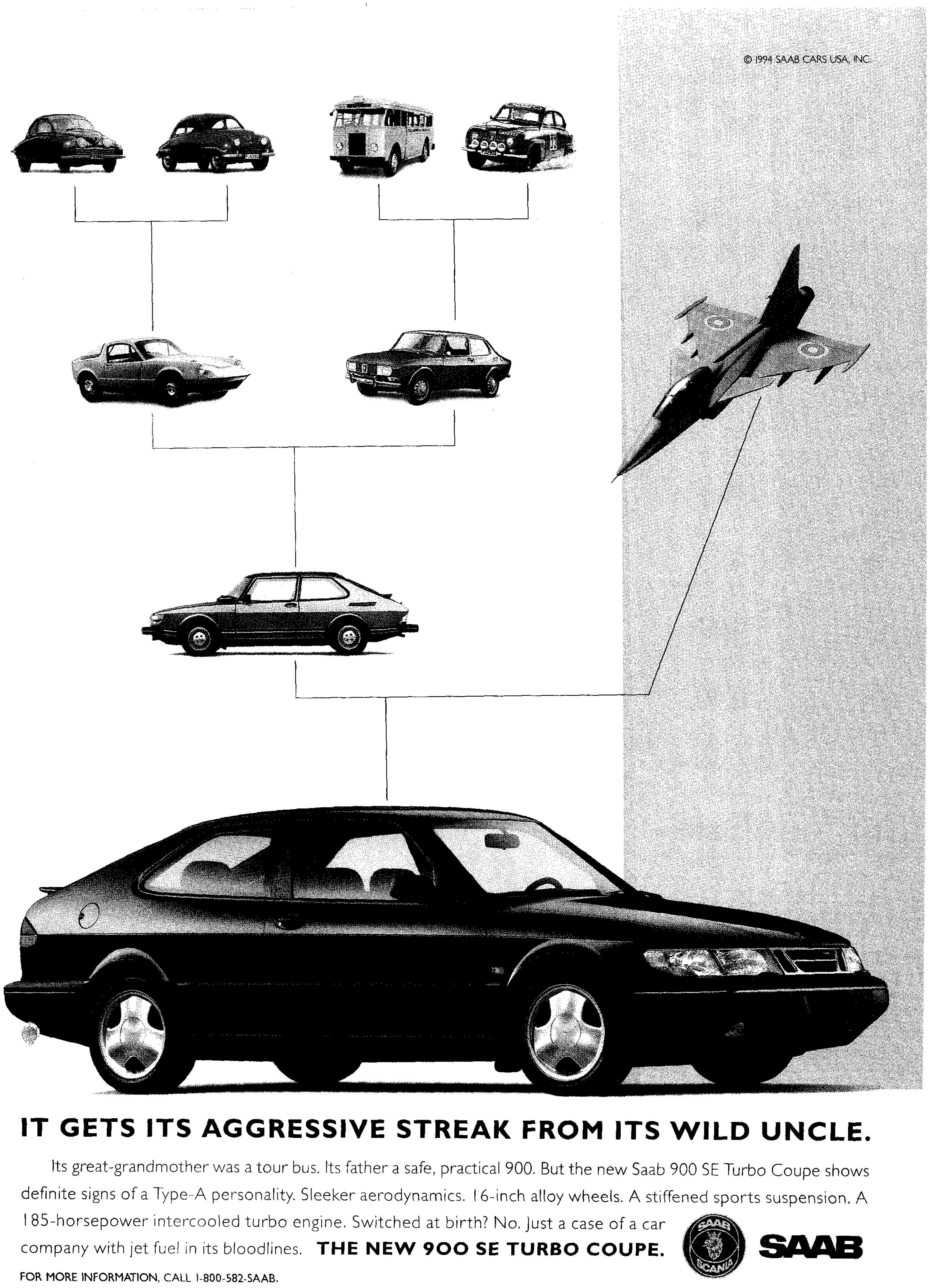

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ART—Cont'd

Oyvind Fahlström (1928-76)—Paintings with movable elements, including large game boards for "World Trade Monopoly" and "C.I.A. Monopoly." Through May 31. (Nordanstad, 39 Wooster St.)

Robert Gober—Four sculptures, one of which employs the gallery's architecture. Through June 4. (Cooper, 155 Wooster St.)

Duncan Hannah—Representational cityscapes with figures. Through June 4. (Beitzel, 102 Prince St.)

Mary Heilmann—Mostly geometric abstractions from the seventies. Through May 21. (Hearn, 39 Wooster St.)

Michael Heizer—The inaugural show at a new gallery, featuring granite megaliths embedded in the walls and floor. Through June 30. (Ace, 275 Hudson, at Spring St.)

Alan Herman / Keith Long—Constructions of unpeopled interiors. / Wall pieces. Through May 28. (OK Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Jenny Holzer—An installation that features a leather-covered hut embossed with texts, based on the artist's reaction to crimes against women. Through June 30. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Guillermo Kuitca—"The Tablada Suite," a series of ten paintings containing imagery based on architectural plans for hospitals, cemeteries, and prisons. Through June 11. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St.)

Liz Larner—Cast-pewter hands suspended from the ceiling. Through June 4. (303 Gallery, 89 Greene St.)

Keith Sonnier—Two viewer-interactive wall reliefs, plus screen prints. Through June 30. (Senior, 375 West Broadway.)

Grace Bakst Wapner—Sculptures of abstract paired figures. Through June 11. (Steinbaum Krauss, 132 Greene St.)

AUCTIONS

Swifty's Legacy—Sotheby's spring sale of Impressionist and modern art, on May 11 at 7 and May 12 at 10:15 and 2, will feature a dozen paintings from the collection of the late Mary and Irving Lazar. The Lazars, who were fond of entertaining, surrounded themselves with the finer things, among them Paul Delvaux's "The Dream (the Garrett)" (1944), in which the artist is in never-never land with a bevy of female nudes (estimate: $800,000-$1,000,000). (York Ave. at 72nd St. For further information, call 606-7176.)

Fifth Avenue Art & Antiques Show—The venue is as historic as some of the offerings in this show, which brings together twenty-five dealers from London and the United States. (Sinclair-Fletcher Mansion, 2 E. 79th St. May 12-14, from 11 to 7, and May 15, from 11 to 5. Tickets at the door on the days of the sale.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

William Abranowicz—Forty delicately lit black-and-white prints. Through June 4. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway.)

Mariana Cook—Photographs of fathers and their daughters by a student of Ansel Adams. Through June 25. (Sander, 19 E. 76th St.)

Lynn Davis—Photographs of religious and architectural artifacts in Burma, Cambodia, and Thailand. Through May 21. (Danziger, 130 Prince St.)

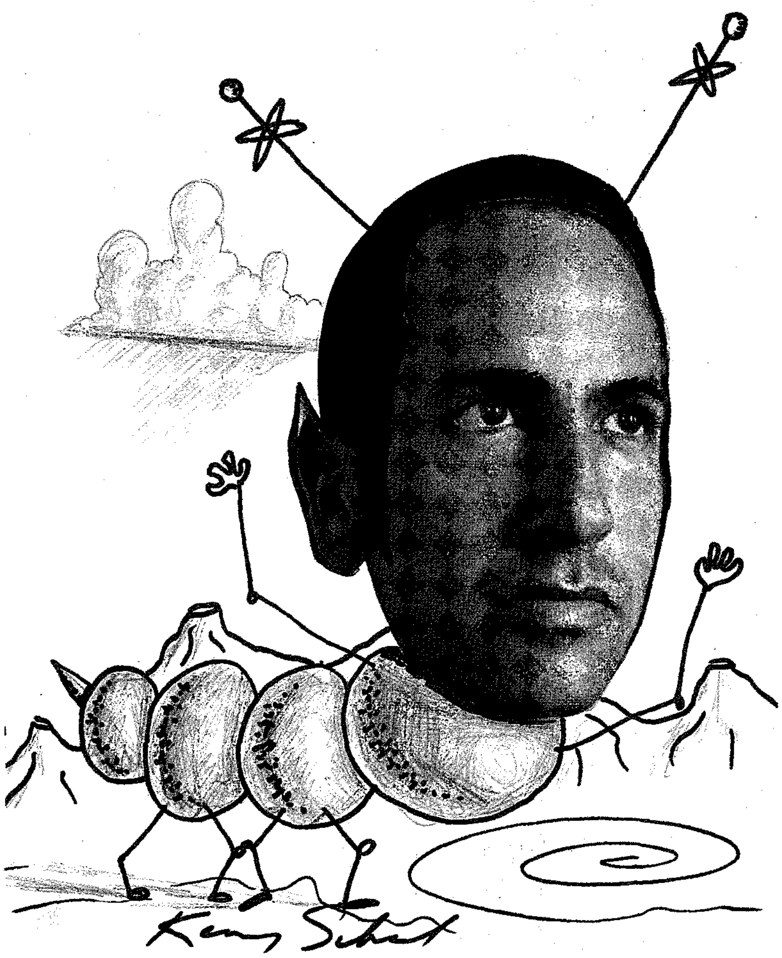
Emmet Gowin—Images of the Czech Republic and the American West. Through June 4. (Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St.)

Robert Glenn Ketchum—Landscapes in Alaska and the Hudson Valley. Through May 28. (Burden, 20 E. 23rd St.)

Mari Mahr—Subtle, dreamlike images that incorporate found and constructed materials. Through June 24. (Benrubi, 52 E. 76th St.)

Andrew Moore—Silver prints made with a pinhole video camera. Through June 4. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

"The Street Walkers"—Photographs taken surreptitiously by Leo Levinstein and Frank Paulin, capturing life in Mexico, Haiti, India, and Europe. Through June 18. (Greenberg, 120 Wooster St.)



Self-portrait by Kenny Scharf (Shafrazi).

International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—"Henri Cartier-Bresson: Hommage." Forty photographs by the French master. Opens May 13. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St.—"American Ground Zero: The Secret Nuclear War." A remarkable set of photographs by Carole Gallagher, documenting the victims of radioactive fallout in the Western United States. . . . ¶ Bright, candy-colored photographs of life in northern New Mexico, by Alex Harris. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum, the China Institute, the American Museum of the Moving Image, P. S. 1, and the Schomburg Center.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Painting Sound

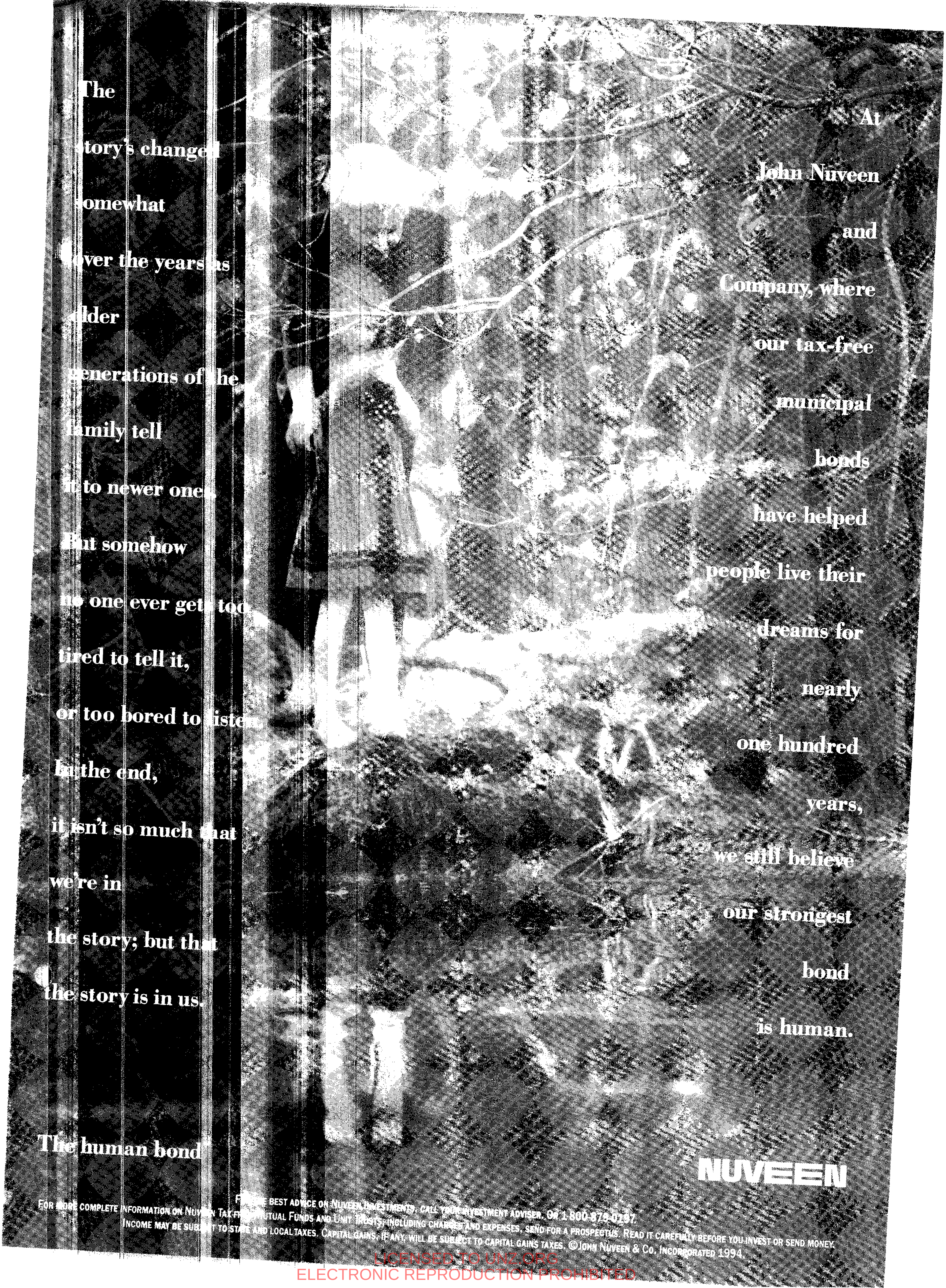
Applying the term "Impressionism" to music always invites debate. Debussy is the first composer who comes to mind, but he felt more allied to the symbolist poets than to the painters in the circle of Monet. The word often came up in reference to Wagner, which seems inexplicable today. When Wagner and Renoir discussed the idea of "musical Impressionism," in Venice in 1882, it seems they had the picturesque scores of Emmanuel Chabrier on their minds. Not many turn-of-the-century Europeans would have advanced the names of American composers as Impressionists, but then again few could have named *any* American composer, period.

As a corollary to its exhibit of American Impressionist and realist painting, the Metropolitan Museum has invited the pianist Alan Feinberg, a master of thematic programming, to play a concert, on May 13. Compared with American Impressionist artists—easily classified by the way they flocked to Shinnecock, Old Lyme, or the Isles of Shoals—American composers spent little time with one another. In fact, the paths of the four composers on Feinberg's program seem to have crossed rarely, if at all. Where an art curator might identify painters by where they worked as well as by stylistic characteristics of their paintings, a "musical curator" has only style to go on. It will be up to Feinberg to connect the dots between such disparate American "musical Impressionists" as Amy Cheney Beach, Edward MacDowell, Charles Tomlinson Griffes, and Percy Grainger—a curious fourth, since he was an Australian who acquired American citizenship only in 1918, by which time Impressionism was generally *dépassé*.

(The box-office number for Avery Fisher Hall is 875-5030; and for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducts Beethoven's "Leonore" Overture No. 3, Piano Concerto No. 1 (with Emanuel Ax), and Symphony No. 5. (Avery Fisher Hall. May 12, May 14, and May 17, all at 8, and May 13 at 11 A.M.)



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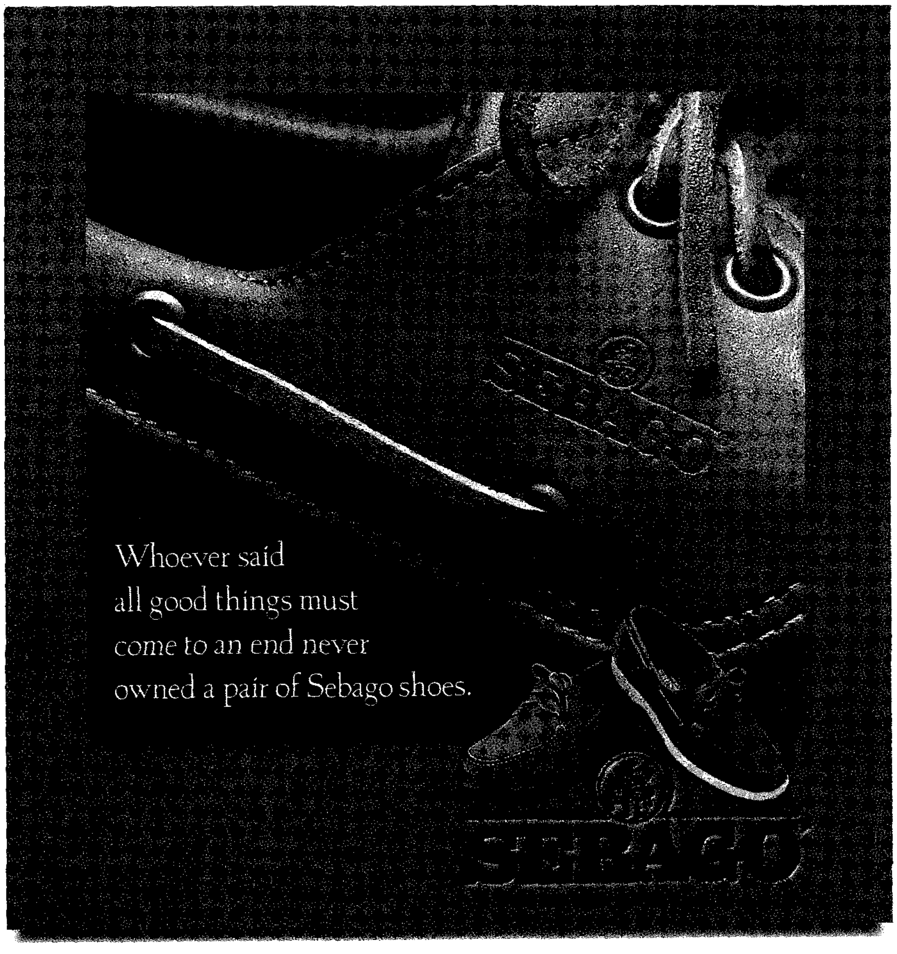

CLASSICAL MUSIC—Cont'd

ARMENIAN MUSIC CELEBRATION—A wide-ranging program that includes medieval Armenian sacred songs and works by the Armenian composer Aram Khatchaturian, in addition to Rossini's Stabat Mater and other well-known repertoire. Performances are entrusted to the Nerses Shnorali Ancient Armenian Music Choir, the New Opera of Moscow Orchestra and Chorus, and various soloists. (Carnegie Hall. May 11 at 8.)

THEODORAKIS FEST—The prolific Greek composer and political figure Mikis Theodorakis conducts three of his own works: "Epiphany," "The Ballad of Mauthausen," and "Axio[illegible] Esti." Featuring the Contemporary Music Orchestra, the Chorus of Hellenic Radio and Television, the Macedonia Chorus, the Popular Orchestra (a folkloric ensemble), and soloists. (Avery Fisher Hall. May 11 at 8.)

NEW YORK DEBUT AND PREMIERE ORCHESTRA—Roberto de Barros conducts John Duffy's "American Fantasy Overture," Haydn's C-Major Cello Concerto (with Vagram Saradjian), and Anton Rubinstein's Piano Concerto No. 4 (with Victor Klimin). (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. May 12 at 8.)

CHICAGO SYMPHONY—At Avery Fisher Hall, Daniel Barenboim conducting. May 13 at 8: Strauss's "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks," Debussy's "La Mer," and Brahms' Symphony No. 2. . . . ¶ May 15 at 3: Mozart's F-Major Piano Concerto (K. 459, with Mr. Barenboim doubling as soloist), the New York première of Carter's Partita, and Brahms' Symphony No. 4. . . . NOTE: Mr. Carter will offer a lecture about his new composition, in Lincoln Center's Kaplan Penthouse, on the tenth floor of the Rose Building, beginning at 2 and open to ticket holders.

GRACE CHORAL SOCIETY OF BROOKLYN—Alexander Rom directs Cherubini's C-Minor Requiem. (Grace Church, Hicks St. at Grace Ct., Brooklyn Heights. For information, call 1-718 852-0727. May 14 at 7:30.)

NEW YORK CHORAL SOCIETY—John Daly Goodwin directs Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis," with soloists Katherine Johnson (soprano), Eugenie Grunewald (mezzo-soprano), Adam Klein (tenor), and Jan Opalach (bass-baritone). (Carnegie Hall. May 14 at 8.)

DESSOFF CHOIRS—Amy Kaiser directs twentieth-century settings of Renaissance poetry—by Donald Martino, Vaughan Williams, and Britten—as well as some Renaissance madrigals. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. May 14 at 8.)

AMERICAN COMPOSERS ORCHESTRA—Dennis Russell Davies conducts Edward Collins' "Tragic Overture," Ellen Taaffe Zwilich's Trombone Concerto (with Christian Lindberg), the première of Jane Ira Bloom's "Einstein's Red/Blue Universe" (featuring the composer as solo soprano saxophonist), and Sessions' Symphony No. 9. (Carnegie Hall. May 15 at 3. . . . NOTE: Ms. Zwilich and Ms. Bloom will talk about their works in a pre-concert discussion beginning at 2 and open to ticket holders.)

WEST VILLAGE CHORALE—Gwen Gould directs Orff's "Carmina Burana" and Brahms' "Zigeunerlieder"; with members of the Columbia Festival Orchestra. (St. Luke I[illegible] the-Fields, 487 Hudson St., at Grove [illegible] May 15 at 4. For information about tickets, call 570-7301.)

MANHATTAN SCHOOL OF MUSIC SYMPHONY—Kurt Masur conducts the première of Siegfried Matthus's "Manhattan Concerto" and Franck's D-Minor Symphony; a children's choir will share the bill. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802, ext. 428. May 16 at 7.)

ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S—Ransom Wilson conducts Respighi's "Trittico Botticelliano," Ravel's "Le Tombeau de Couperin," Tchaikovsky's "Variations on a Rococo Theme," and Haydn's C-Major Cello Concerto (with the last two featuring Wendy Warner). (Alice Tully Hall. May 17 at 8.)

RECITALS

Parnassus—Performing Poul Ruders' "4 Compositions," the première of Eric Chasalow's "In the Works," and septets by Stravinsky and Nancarrow. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. May 11 at 8.)

Schubert for Men's Voices—That's the name of a group whose mission seems pretty clear. In their first concert, the five singers and two pianists (plus a guest French hornist) will serve up a generous helping of the composer's lieder and part-songs. (Greenwich House Music School, 46 Barrow St. May 11 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Chopin Piano Competition—Aspiring pianists will be parading through the Kosciuszko Foundation this week to demonstrate their abilities as Chopin players (and their skills in other repertoires, too). The general public is invited to observe the proceedings. (15 E. 65th St. No tickets are necessary for the preliminary round, which will take place May 12-13, from 2 until about 5. For information about tickets to the finals, which begin May 14 at 2, call 734-2130.)

Surprise!—Margrit Schenker and Pauline Oliveros—accordionists both—will be joined by performance artist Julie Lyon Balliett and percussionist Jason Finkelman in a series of pieces that re-create Ms. Oliveros's teaching methods, which Ms. Schenker describes thus: "Oliveros sits in the center of the circle, letting things happen around her." Following an opening section in which Ms. Oliveros serves as a hub for the trio to surround, some movement-accompanied piano solos, and an accordion duet, a surprise is promised as the experience reaches its climax. Be prepared. (Swiss Institute, 35 W. 67th St. May 12 at 7. No tickets necessary.)

Bargemusic—Violinist Ik-Hwan Bae and pianist David Oei perform Saint-Saëns' D-Major Sonata (Op. 75); cellist Christopher Costanza joins them for piano trios by Beethoven (the composer's arrangement of his Op. 38 Septet) and Smetana (in G Minor). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. May 12 at 7:30 and May 15 at 4.)

Alfred Brendel—The pianist performs Beethoven's Sonatas in E Major (Op. 14, No. 1), G Major (Op. 14, No. 2), C Minor (Op. 13, the "Pathétique"), B-Flat Major (Op. 22), and E-Flat Major (Op. 81a, the "Les Adieux"). (Carnegie Hall. May 12 at 8.)

Avery Fisher Memorial—In a musical tribute to the late philanthropist, the Juilliard String Quartet will be joined by cellist Yo-Yo Ma and pianist Emanuel Ax. (Avery Fisher Hall. May 13 at 3:30. Tickets, which are free, will be available at the box office beginning at 3:15 on the day of the concert, on a first come, first served basis.)

Alan Feinberg—Pianist, performing and discussing music by Amy Cheney Beach (including her "Hermit Thrush at Eve"), Charles Tomlinson Griffes (including "The White Peacock" and "The Fountain of Acqua Paola"), Edward MacDowell ("Of Salamanders," "In Deep Woods"), and Percy Grainger (transcriptions of songs by Fauré). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. May 13 at 7.)

American Festival of Microtonal Music—Presenting music that employs nontraditional tunings, by Harry Partch (his "Barstow"), Al Kryszak (his film score for the 1928 silent film "The Fall of the House of Usher," which will be screened as the piece is played), and others. (New York University Theatre, 35 W. Fourth St. May 13 at 8. For information about tickets, call 517-3550.)

McDermott Trio—The sororal threesome of violinist Kerry McDermott, cellist Maureen McDermott, and pianist Anne-Marie McDermott performs trios by Brahms and Arensky. (Third Street Music School Settlement, 235 E. 11th St. May 13 at 7:30. No tickets necessary.)

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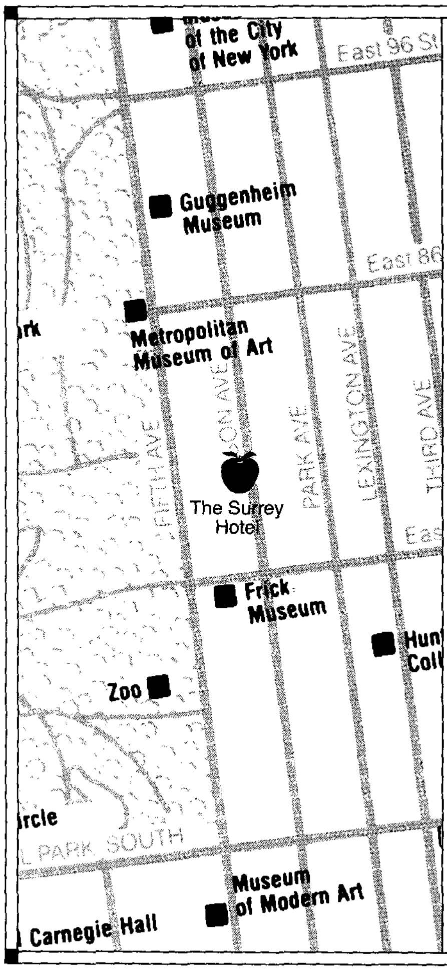

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CLASSICAL MUSIC—Cont'd

Alaria Chamber Ensemble—The ensemble's program includes Ursula Mamlok's "In Celebration," a Telemann trio sonata, Ravel's *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, and Schubert's Trio in B-Flat Major. (Weill Recital Hall. May 13 at 8.)

Ahn Trio—In the week's second sister act, following the McDermotts by only a day, violinist Angella Ahn, cellist Maria Ahn, and pianist Lucia Ahn play trios by Beethoven (in E-Flat Major, Op. 1, No. 1), Ives, and Ravel. A benefit concert. (Weill Recital Hall. May 14 at 2.)

Guarneri Quartet—Performing string quartets by Haydn (in G Major, Op. 76, No. 1) and Beethoven (Op. 95, the "Serioso"), as well as Dvořák's Piano Quartet (with Joseph Kalichstein). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. May 14 at 8.)

Kronos String Quartet—Performing works by Brent Michael Davids, Steven Mackey, Foday Musa Suso, Raymond Scott, and Ken Benshoof. (Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. May 14 at 8.)

New York Chamber Ensemble—Stephen Rogers Radcliffe conducts Britten's "Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge," Hindemith's "Kammermusik No. 3" (featuring cellist Diane Chaplin), and Michael Torke's "Monday and Tuesday" (though on a Saturday). (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. May 14 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 870-2439.)

Lionheart—The male sextet sings fifteenth- and sixteenth-century English music. (St. Ignatius Episcopal Church, West End Ave. at 87th St. May 14 at 8. For information about tickets, call 362-9323.)

Morning Sonatas—Violinist Chin Kim and cellist Inbal Segev play sonatas by Handel and Sammartini, with harpsichordist Ilan Rechtman. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. May 15 at 11:30 A.M. Admission is free, but call 1-718 885-2478 to reserve a seat.)

ARTEK Ensemble—Sopranos Sarah Pillow and Alessandra Visconti join the period-instrument players in a mostly seventeenth-century program that includes monodies and songs by Jacopo Peri, Sigismondo d'India, Monteverdi, and Purcell. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. May 15 at 2:30. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

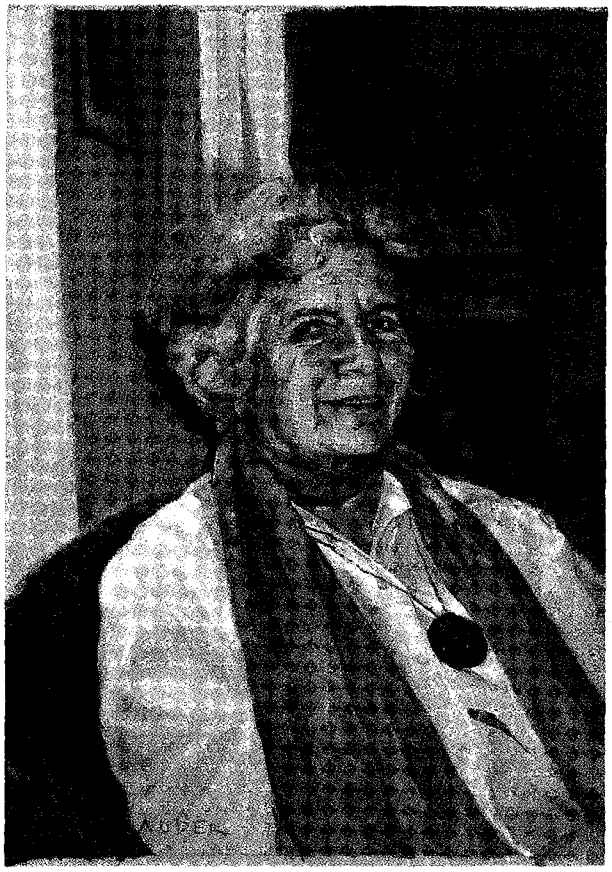
Suzanne Fremon—Pianist, performing Haydn's Sonata in A-Flat Major (No. 31), Schumann's "Fantasiestücke" (Op. 12), Ravel's Sonatine, and Beethoven's C-Major Sonata (Op. 53, the "Waldstein"). (Weill Recital Hall. May 15 at 5:30.)

Scott St. John—Violinist, performing sonatas by Brahms (his First) and Poulenc; with pianist Thomas Bagwell. (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. May 15 at 6 and 8. Admission is free, but call 876-6000 to reserve a seat.)

Tauber Tribute—A musical feast for those who appreciate the legacy of the Viennese tenor Richard Tauber will include Tauber recordings, film clips, and performances by violinist Eric Grossman and tenors Paul Sperry and John Uhlenhopp. (Federal Hall, 26 Wall St. May 16 at noon; the live performance begins at 1:30. No tickets necessary.)

Jeffrey Kahane—Pianist, performing Schubert's A-Major Sonata (D. 959), Schumann's Fantasia (Op. 17), and shorter works by Mendelssohn and Bartók. (Walter Reade Theatre, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. May 16 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Ivo Pogorelich—Pianist, performing Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" and Chopin's four scherzos (plus a prelude). (Carnegie Hall. May 16 at 8.)



Grace Paley at the Manhattan Theatre Club.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Storyteller

When Grace Paley gives a reading, she doesn't plan ahead. "I don't know what I'm going to read until I get there," she says. Paley takes a similarly unfussy approach to her delivery: "Reading aloud dramatically, you can fool yourself, but if you just read it, you can hear better than your eye can see." These days, she's busy reading from her "Collected Stories," which combines her three earlier books—"The Little Disturbances of Man," "Enormous Changes at the Last Minute," and "Later the Same Day"—under one cover. ("I hope it's as good as the cover," she says.) Paley's stories are local, in the wisest sense. If you ask her whether she would write about what's going on in South Africa, she says no. A character might comment on the situation, she adds, but "if your feet aren't in the mud of a place, you'd better watch where your mouth is." Paley will decide what to read a few minutes before 7:30 on May 16, when she is scheduled to appear at the Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center (131 W. 55th St.; 645-5848).

A Different Address—A Different Light, the gay and lesbian bookstore, has moved to Chelsea. May 15 at 8: Suzanne Gardinier will read from her book-length poem, "The New World." With Gerry Gomez Pearlberg and Kim Vaeth. . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: Heather Lewis will read from her novel, "House Rules." (A Different Light, 151 W. 19th St. No tickets necessary.)

Brown Baggin' It—Bryant Park's second annual festival of lunch will give new meaning to "Let's do lunch." The chefs, from restaurants as diverse as the Cotton Club and Le Bar Bat, will be awarding prizes for the oldest edible lunch, the longest sausage, and the most beautiful lunch, among other categories. You bring the food. (Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. May 17 at 12:30.)

Ninth Avenue Smorgasbord—Souvlaki, New Zealand oysters, kielbasa, hummus, and eggrolls—just about everything, including Mom's apple pie—will be available for sampling at the International Food Festival. (Ninth Ave. between 37th and 57th Sts. May 14-15, from 11 to 7.)

Dog Day—Dogs and their friends are invited to Hudson River Park on May 15 at 10, for K9 Day '94. There will be Seeing Eye dog and obedience demonstrations, as well as a mile run and a two-mile walk to benefit the Humane Society. For more information, call 289-4113.

Rodeo Harlem—The Black World Championship Rodeo is back in town. On May 14 at 10, there will be a parade; the rodeo will open with preshow entertainment at noon. The bull-riding and barrel-racing events start at 3. (Col. Charles Young Park, Lenox Ave. at 143rd St. May 14, from 10 to 6. For more information, call 675-0085.)

Fishy—The American Museum of Natural History's Ichthyology Department will help visitors seine in the Hudson River off George's Island; the catch will be identified, and then preserved or released. Previously caught shad will be baked on planks. Lectures about local fish and geology will also be offered. (May 14, from 9 to 5. To register, call 289-3605.) . . . ¶ The striped bass are making their annual migration up the Hudson from their salt-water homes. The Urban Park Rangers have organized a BassBlast, featuring a fly fisherman, bass in a fish tank, and sea-chantey singing. (Carl Schurz Park, East End Ave. between 84th and 90th Sts. May 14, from noon to 4. No tickets necessary.)

Biking the Boroughs—Bike New York: The Great Five Boro Bike Tour will leave from Battery Park on May 15 at 8 A.M., pedal the five boroughs via Columbus Circle, the F.D.R. Drive, Astoria Park, and the Verrazano Narrows Bridge, and wind up on Staten Island. To register or to volunteer, call 932-0778.

Dove & Gunn—The Poetry Society of America will present poets Rita Dove and Thom Gunn reading from their own work. (Grand Central Terminal, East Balcony. May 11 at 7:30. Tickets at the entrance to the balcony on the night of the reading.)

Hail Octavio—On the occasion of his eightieth birthday. May 11 at 8:30: Octavio Paz will read from his own poetry. With John Ashbery, Joseph Brodsky, Bei Dao, and Mark Strand among others. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. Tickets, which are free, will be available at 7:30 on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ May 14, from 11 to 1 and from 3 to 5: Panel discussions with Paz, about his writing. In the morning, poetry; in the afternoon, prose. (New Scho[illegible] 66 W. 12th St. No tickets necessary.)

PANYC—A symposium with the Professional Archaeologists of New York City on how artifacts are used to reconstruct and interpret the city's history. (Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. May 14, from 1 to 3. Tickets at the door on the day of the symposium.)

Readings—May 12 at 7:30: Jim Harrison will read from his new collection of three novellas, "Julip." (Books & Co., 939 Madison Ave., at 74th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 15 at 3: Norman Wong will read from his story collection, "Cultural Revolution." (Chinatown History Museum, 70 Mulberry St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ May 17 at 7: Fran Lebowitz will read from her novel in progress, "Exterior Signs of Wealth." (Limbo, 47 Avenue A, at 4th St. No tickets necessary.)

KELYNN Z. ALDER

Walks & Tours—May 14-15: The Jackson Heights Beautification Group is sponsoring a weekend of events, including tours and a lecture, focussing on the area's historic district. For more information, call 1-718 898-7205. . . . ¶ May 15, from 11 to 4: Six downtown houses will be open for inspection, as part of the Village Community School's annual tour. For more information, call 691-5146.

SPORTS

(The Knicks and the Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Nets and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900; the Yankees at Yankee Stadium, 1-718 293-6000, and the Mets at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

HOME TEAMS

Yankees—Vs. the Cleveland Indians, May 11 at 7:05 and May 12 at 1:05 (Briefcase Day).

Mets—Vs. the Atlanta Braves, May 13 at 7:40 and May 14-15 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the Florida Marlins, May 16-17 at 7:40.

CHAMPIONSHIP HOCKEY

Semi-Tough—As of press time, the Rangers had beaten the Washington Capitals in the first two games of the seven-game Eastern Conference semifinals. After squeaking by the Buffalo Sabres, the Devils were trailing the Boston Bruins by two. Chances of a commuter series in hockey look slim.

CHAMPIONSHIP BASKETBALL

N.Y. vs. N.J.—As these pages went to print, the Knicks were beating the Nets, 2-1, in the first round of the Eastern Conference N.B.A. playoffs.

RACING

Rat Racers—Runners in business suits will race through the financial district. May 12 at 6:30. For more information, call 860-4455.

FOR KIDS

(A list of activities for children and their parents or other adults.)

Puppettime—Taiwan's Fu Hsing Ko Shadow Puppet Troupe presents "Na Cha Stirs the Eastern Sea," billed as "the story of a naughty yet mighty god." Both English and Chinese subtitles will be used. (Taipei Theatre, 1221 Sixth Ave., at 48th St. 373-1850. May 13 at 7:30, May 14 at 2 and 7:30, and May 15 at 2.) . . . ¶ The Bits 'n Pieces Puppet Theatre employs some mighty big puppets (at least nine feet high) in their production of "Greenthing the Dinosaur," which is based on Aesop's fable of "The Grasshopper and the Ant." (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. May 14 at 2.)

Literary Endeavors—Art Spiegelman will read from his favorite Donald Duck and Little Lulu comic books, and Jon Scieszka will read from his book "The Stinky Cheese Man and Other Fairly Stupid Tales" and a new work. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. May 15 at 3. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ In "For Children, by Children," twelve students from local elementary schools and junior high schools will read from their own works. Author Sook Nyul Choi ("Year of the Impossible Goodbyes") will also read. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848. May 14 at 11.)

Musically Inclined—The New York Philharmonic's final Young People's Concert of the season features Emanuel Ax in Beethoven's Piano Concerto No. 1. Kurt Masur conducts. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. May 14 at 2.)

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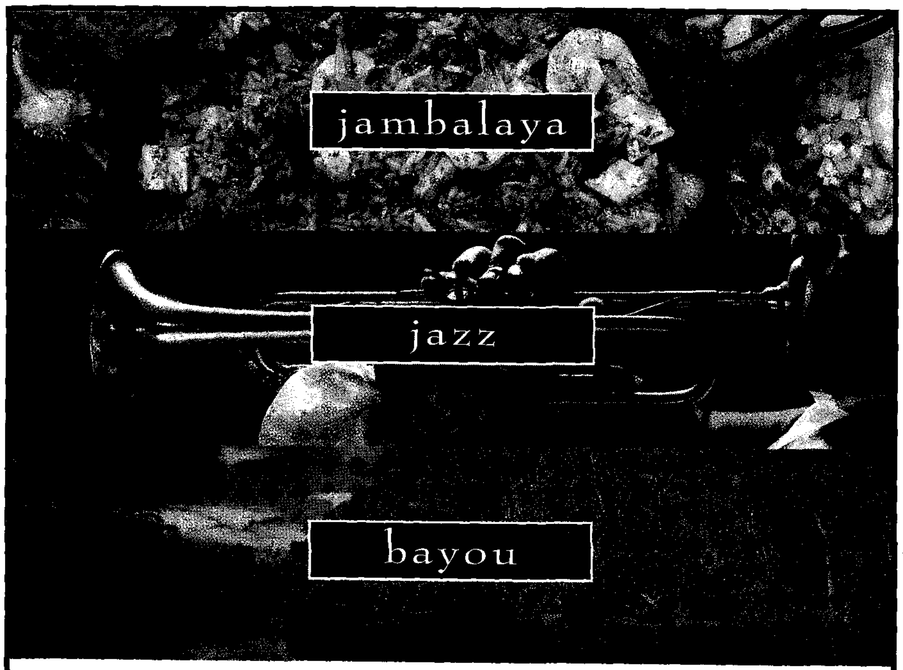


Let's face it: words are words and they're pretty boring. Except in a state called Louisiana. Here, instead of meat and potatoes, we eat jambalaya and gumbo. We don't just listen to music, we listen to jazz. And when we go fishing, odds are it's on a bayou. So come have a good time in Louisiana. And say things you've never seen before. For your FREE Louisiana Tour Guide, just say the word. Return the reader service card or call today. 1-800-933-6816

Louisiana

THE MOVIES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
15	16	17	11	12	13	14

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 33.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Backbeat" (†).
Theatre 2: "Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould" (†).
Theatre 3: "Cronos" (directed by Guillermo del Toro, in English and Spanish).
Theatre 4: "Kika" (†).
Theatre 5: "Sirens" (†).
Theatre 6: "The House of the Spirits" (†).

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through May 12: "I Only Want You to Love Me" (1976, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German).
From May 13: "The Conviction" (1990, Marco Bellocchio; in Italian).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "With Honors" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dream Lover" (Nicholas Kazan).
Theatre 3: Through May 12: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (Don Bluth), and "Bad Girls" (†). From May 13: "Trading Mom" (Tia Brelis).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: Through May 12: The Fifth Annual Human Rights Watch International Film Festival. From May 13: To be announced.
Theatre 2: "Being Human" (Bill Forsyth).
Theatre 3: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (†).
Theatre 4: "Naked in New York" (Dan Algrant), with Eric Stoltz.
Theatre 5: "You So Crazy" (†).
Theatre 6: "3 Ninjas Kick Back" (Charles T. Kanganis).
Theatre 7: Through May 12: The Fifth Annual Human Rights Watch International Film Festival. From May 13: To be announced.

Cinema Village, *22 E. 12th. (924-3363)*
"Babyfever" (Henry Jaglom), with Victoria Foyt.

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Belle Époque" (Fernando Trueba, in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "Serial Mom" (†).
Theatre 3: Through May 12: "The Secret Rapture" (Howard Davies), with Juliet Stevenson. From May 13: "When a Man Loves a Woman" (Luis Mandoki), with Andy Garcia and Meg Ryan.
Theatre 4: "No Escape" (†).
Theatre 5: "Savage Nights" (Cyril Collard, in French), with Collard.
Theatre 6: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich), with Larenz Tate and Joe Morton.
Theatre 7: "Like Water for Chocolate" (†).

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (†).
Theatre 2: "Serial Mom" (†).
Theatre 3: "3 Ninjas Kick Back" (Charles T. Kanganis).
Theatre 4: "When a Man Loves a Woman" (Luis Mandoki), with Andy Garcia and Meg Ryan.
Theatre 5: "No Escape" (†).
Theatre 6: "Being Human" (Bill Forsyth), with Robin Williams.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: Through May 12: "The Favor" (†). From May 13: "When a Man Loves a Woman" (Luis Mandoki).
Theatre 2: "Sirens" (†).
Theatre 3: "Clean Slate" (Mick Jackson), with Dana Carvey and Valeria Golino.
Theatre 4: "Being Human" (Bill Forsyth), with Robin Williams.

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Backbeat" (†).
Theatre 2: "You So Crazy" (†).
Theatre 3: "No Escape" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Schindler's List" (Steven Spielberg).

Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Belle Époque" (Fernando Trueba, in Spanish).

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich), with Larenz Tate and Joe Morton.
Theatre 2: "Serial Mom" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Bad Girls" (†).

Plaza, *42 E. 58th. (355-3320)*
"In Custody" (Ismail Merchant, in Urdu).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "No Escape" (†).
Theatre 2: "You So Crazy" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, *239 E. 59th. (759-4630)*
"The House of the Spirits" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. *(355-1663)*
Theatre 1: "Clean Slate" (Mick Jackson).
Theatre 2: Through May 12: "The Paper" (Ron Howard), with Michael Keaton. From *May 13: "Crooklyn" (Spike Lee).*

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "When a Man Loves a Woman" (Luis Mandoki).
Theatre 2: "The Secret Rapture" (Howard Davies), with Juliet Stevenson.
Theatre 3: "Babyfever" (Henry Jaglom).

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "In the Name of the Father" (Jim Sheridan), with Daniel Day-Lewis.
Theatre 2: "Schindler's List" (Steven *Spielberg), with Liam Neeson.*
Theatre 3: "The Crow" (Alex Proyas).
Theatre 4: "Reality Bites" (Ben Stiller).
Theatre 5: "Being Human" (Bill Forsyth).
Theatre 6: "The Piano" (Jane Campion).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through May 12: "The Favor" (†). From May 13: "Trading Mom" (Tia Brelis).
Theatre 2: "3 Ninjas Kick Back" (Charles T. Kanganis).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Naked in New York" (Dan Algrant).

New York Twin, *2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)*
Theatre 1: "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (†).
Theatre 2: "With Honors" (†).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Sirens" (†).

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Backbeat" (†).

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Clean Slate" (Mick Jackson).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: Through May 12: "The Paper" (Ron Howard), with Michael Keaton. From May 13: "Crooklyn" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 2: "Bad Girls" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "PCU" (†); and "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 2: "No Escape" (†).
Theatre 3: "3 Ninjas Kick Back" (Charles T. Kanganis).
Theatre 4: "The House of the Spirits" (†).
Theatre 5: "Serial Mom" (†).
Theatre 6: "With Honors" (†).
Theatre 7: "The Favor" (†).

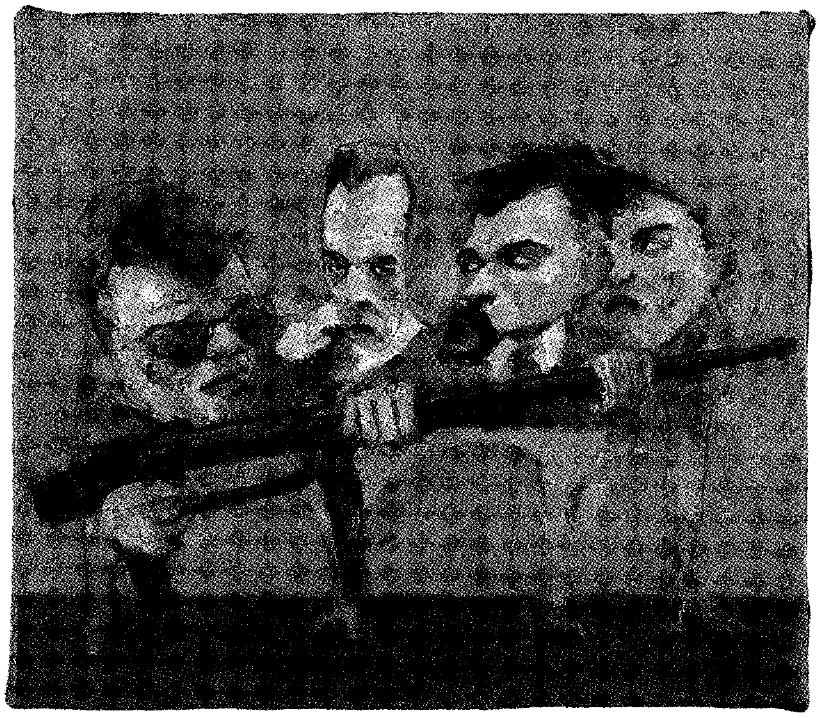
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. *(249-1144)*
Theatre 1: Through May 12: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich). From May 13: "When a *Man Loves a Woman"* (Luis Mandoki).
Theatre 2: "You So Crazy" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: "La Scorta" (directed by Ricky Tognazzi, in Italian).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl" (†) and "Sunday's Children" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. [illegible] 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "In the Name of the Father" (Jim Sheridan), with Daniel Day-Lewis.
Theatre 2: "The Paper" (Ron Howard).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Clean Slate" (Mick Jackson), with Dana Carvey and Valeria Golino.
Theatre 2: Through May 12: "Schindler's List" (Steven Spielberg), with Liam Neeson. From May 13: "Crooklyn" (Spike Lee).


At the Film Forum, Ricky Tognazzi's "La Scorta."

N. ASCENCIOS

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: Through May 12: "Dream and Memory" (Ann Hu, in Mandarin and English). From May 13: The 1994 New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.
Theatre 2: "The Blue Kite" (†).
Theatre 3: "Bitter Moon" (†).
Theatre 4: Through May 12: "I Am My Own Woman" (Rosa Von Praunheim, in German). From May 13: The 1994 New York Lesbian & Gay Film Festival.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: Through May 12: "Naked in New York" (Dan Algrant), with Eric Stoltz. From May 13: "Crooklyn" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 2: "The Paper" (Ron Howard).
Theatre 3: "Bad Girls" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).
Theatre 5: "Schindler's List" (Steven Spielberg), with Liam Neeson.
Theatre 6: "With Honors" (†).
Theatre 7: "Clean Slate" (Mick Jackson).
Theatre 8: "Threesome" (Andrew Fleming).
Theatre 9: "The House of the Spirits" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "You So Crazy" (†).
Theatre 2: "You So Crazy" (†).
Theatre 3: "Sankofa" (Haile Gerima).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"When a Man Loves a Woman" (Luis Mandoki), with Andy Garcia and Meg Ryan.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Six Degrees of Separation" (Fred Schepisi).
Theatre 2: "Shadowlands" (Richard Attenborough).
Theatre 3: "Jurassic Park" (Steven Spielberg).
Theatre 4: "Mrs. Doubtfire" (Chris Columbus).
Theatre 5: "The Snapper" (Stephen Frears).
Theatre 6: "Ace Ventura: Pet Detective" (Tom Shadyac), with Jim Carrey.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"That's Entertainment! III" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Dream Lover" (Nicholas Kazan).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Sirens" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "The House of the Spirits" (†).
Theatre 2: "Like Water for Chocolate" (†).

Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th. (586-1900)
"High Lonesome: The Story of Bluegrass Music" (Rachel Liebling), a documentary.

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
Through May 12: "Germinal" (Claude Berri, in French).
From May 13: "Widow's Peak" (John Irvin).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Bitter Moon" (†).

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Four Weddings and a Funeral" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
Through May 12: "Clean Slate" (Mick Jackson).
From May 13: "Crooklyn" (Spike Lee).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "A Tale of Winter" (†).
Theatre 2: "Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould" (†).
Theatre 3: "Kika" (†).
Theatre 4: "Kika" (†).
Theatre 5: "Red Rock West" (†).
Theatre 6: "Belle Époque" (Fernando Trueba, in Spanish).

GENCY, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Schindler's List" (Steven Spielberg).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "No Escape" (†).
Theatre 2: Through May 12: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich). From May 13: "When a Man Loves a Woman" (Luis Mandoki).
Theatre 3: "With Honors" (†).
Theatre 4: "3 Ninjas Kick Back" (Charles T. Kanganis).
Theatre 5: "Serial Mom" (†).
Theatre 6: "Being Human" (Bill Forsyth).

Thalia, B'way at 95th. (316-4962)
"Babyfever" (Henry Jaglom), with Victoria Foyt.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "The Paper" (Ron Howard).
Theatre 2: Through May 12: "Bad Girls" (†). From May 13: "Trading Mom" (Tia Brelis).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "The Favor" (†).
Theatre 2: "You So Crazy" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Serial Mom" (†).
Theatre 2: Through May 12: "Hans Christian Andersen's Thumbelina" (directed by Don Bluth), an animated film; and "PCU" (†). From May 13: "Trading Mom" (Tia Brelis).
Theatre 3: "3 Ninjas Kick Back" (Charles T. Kanganis).
Theatre 4: "No Escape" (†).
Theatre 5: "Being Human" (Bill Forsyth).
Theatre 6: "With Honors" (†).
Theatre 7: "Surviving the Game" (Ernest Dickerson).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through May 12: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).
From May 13: "The Crow" (Alex Proyas).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: Through May 12: "You So Crazy" (†). From May 13: "The Crow" (Alex Proyas).
Theatre 2: "You So Crazy" (†).
Theatre 3: Through May 12: "The Favor" (†). From May 13: "The Inkwell" (Matty Rich).

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Brainscan" (John Flynn), with Edward Furlong.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: Through May 12: "Bad Girls" (†). From May 13: "Crooklyn" (Spike Lee).
Theatre 2: "Clean Slate" (Mick Jackson).

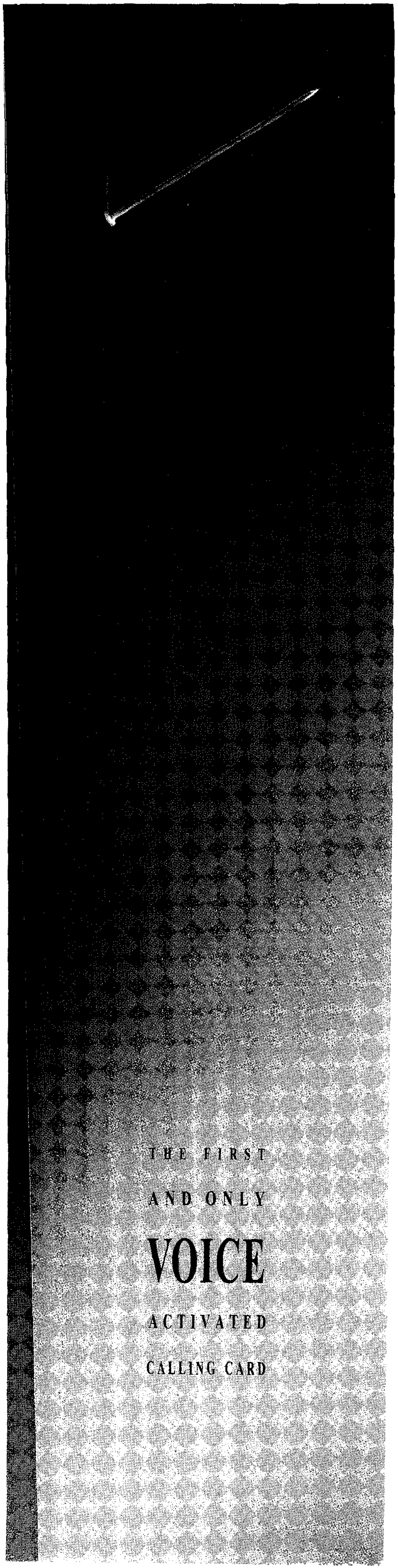
REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
May 11: "Our Dancing Daughters" (1928, directed by Harry Beaumont; silent), with Joan Crawford; and "The Kiss" (1929, Jacques Feyder), with Greta Garbo.
May 12: A benefit showing of clips from Bob Fosse films.
From May 13: "Cabaret" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
May 11: "Kiss Me Deadly" (1955, Robert Aldrich), with Ralph Meeker; and "Kiss of Death" (1947, Henry Hathaway), with Victor Mature and Richard Widmark.
May 12: "Anatomy of a Murder" (†) and "Arsène Lupin" (†).
May 13-14: "North by Northwest" (1959, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, and James Mason; and "To Catch a Thief" (1955, Hitchcock), with Grant and Grace Kelly.
May 15: "The Trial" (1962, Orson Welles), with Anthony Perkins; and "The Third Man" (1950, Carol Reed), with Welles and Joseph Cotten.
May 16: "Testament of Orpheus" (1959, Jean Cocteau; in French) "The Blood of a Poet" (1930, Cocteau; in French) and "Orpheus" (1949, Cocteau; in French).
May 17: "Breaking Away" (†) and "The Paper Chase" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—May 12 at 2:30: "Three Make a Pair" (1957, directed by Sacha Guitry; in French). . . . ¶ May 12 at 3 and 6: "Black Man's Houses" (1992, Steve Thomas). . . . ¶ May 12 at 6: "Murderers and Thieves" (1957, Guitry; in French). . . . ¶ May 12 at 8: "Poison" (1951, Guitry; in French). . . . ¶ May 13 at 2:30: "Bizet's Carmen" (†). . . . ¶ May 13 at 3: "Homage to August Sander" (1977, Pavel Schnabel and Marlisa Stubenrauch). . . . ¶ May 13 at 6: "Don Giovanni" (1979, Joseph Losey; in Italian). . . . ¶ May 13 at 6:30: "John Heartfield, Photomonteur" (1977, Helmut Herbst). . . . ¶ May 14 at 12:30: "Les Vampires" (1915-16, Louis Feuillade; an eight-hour French silent film, with two intermissions). . . . ¶ May 14 at 2:30: "Snow-screen: The Art of Michael Snow" (1984, Robert Shoub). . . . ¶ May 14 at 5: "Spiral Jetty" (1970, Robert Smithson) and "Sun Tunnels" (1978, Nancy Holt). . . . ¶ May 15 at 1: Early French films, 1906-15. . . . ¶ May 15 at 2:30: "America" (1980, James Ackerman). . . . ¶ May 15 at 3: Films by



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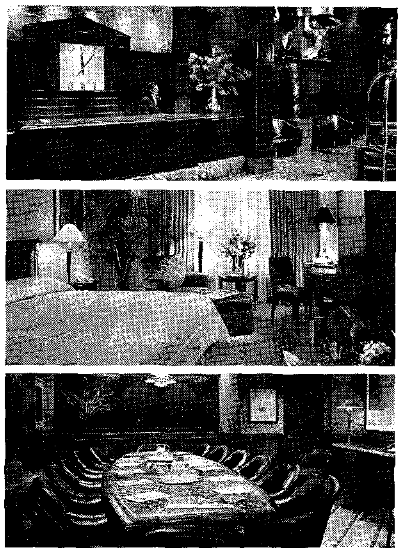

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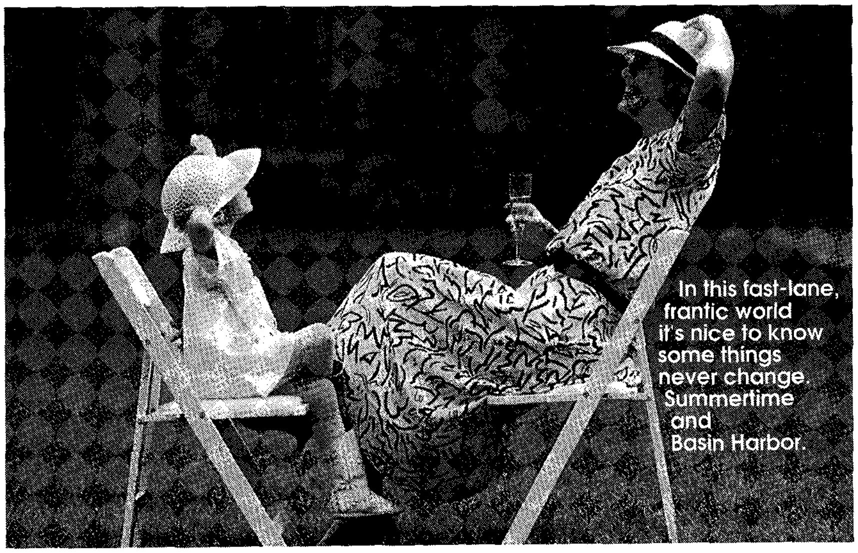

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Feuillade, 1911-14. . . . ¶ May 15 at 5: "The Organ Builders of Bethnal Green" (1979, Henry Lewes) and other short films. . . . ¶ May 15 at 5: Early French realist films, 1911-13. . . . ¶ May 16 at 2:30: "Sérier Noire" (1979, Alain Corneau; in French). . . . ¶ May 16 at 6: "The Passion of Joan of Arc" (1928, Carl Dreyer). . . . ¶ May 17 at 2:30: "La Chèvre" (1981, Francis Veber; in French). . . . ¶ May 17 at 6: "La Nuit de Varennes" (1981, Ettore Scola; in French).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Through May 12: Six programs of films by Native Americans. . . . ¶ May 13 at 3:40 and 7:30: "Phantom Lady" (1944, Robert Siodmak). . . . ¶ May 13 at 5:45 and 9:20: "Mr. Dynamite" (1935, Alan Crosland), with Edmund Lowe. . . . ¶ May 14 at 4 and 7:30: "Ticket-of-Leave Man" (1937, George King). . . . ¶ May 14 at 5:30 and 9: "Murder, My Sweet" (1945, Edward Dmytryk), with Dick Powell. . . . ¶ May 15 at 3:30, 6:45, and 10: "Bulldog Drummond Strikes Back" (1934, Roy Del Ruth), with Ronald Colman. . . . ¶ May 15 at 5:15 and 8:30: "Shadow of Doubt" (1935, George B. Seitz). . . . ¶ May 17 at 2, 5:45, and 9:30: "After the Thin Man" (1936, W. S. Van Dyke), with Myrna Loy and William Powell. . . . ¶ May 17 at 4 and 8: "Tell No Tales" (1938, Leslie Fenton), with Melvyn Douglas.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—May 15 at 2: "What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?" (1962, Robert Aldrich), with Bette Davis and Joan Crawford. . . . ¶ May 15 at 4:30: "Eyes" (1969, Steven Spielberg), an episode of "Night Gallery," with Crawford; and a 1966 British television interview by Crawford.

Symphony Space, B'way at 95th St. (864-5400)—A series of films by American independent filmmakers. May 17 at 7: "The Hours and Times" (1992, Christopher Münch). . . . ¶ May 17 at 8:30: "Rock Hudson's Home Movies" (1992, Mark Rappaport).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—May 11 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Betty" (1993, Claude Chabrol; in French).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—A retrospective of films and videos by Willie Varela. Call for schedule and screening times.

Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway. (1-718 638-5000)—A program of films from Africa. May 14 at 2: "In Darkest Hollywood: Cinema & Apartheid" (1992, Peter Davis and Daniel Riesenfield). . . . ¶ May 15 at 2: "God's Gift" (1982, Gaston Kaboré).

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—May 13 at 6:30: "Quilombo" (1984, Carlos Diegues). . . . ¶ May 13 at 8:25: "God's Will" (1991, David Achlar). . . . ¶ May 16 at 6:30: "Life Is Rosy" (1987, Ngangura Mweze). . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: "Angano . . . Angano" (1987, Cesar Paes). . . . ¶ May 17 at 6: "Bush Mama" (1976, Haile Gerima). . . . ¶ May 17 at 7:30: "Ashes and Embers" (1983, Gerima).

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-0824)—A retrospective of Shiro Toyoda films. May 13 at 6:30: "Snow Country" (1957). . . . ¶ May 14 at 1: "The Hotelman's Holiday" (1958). . . . ¶ May 14 at 3: "The Twilight Story" (196

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., 2nd St. (505-5181)—May 13 at 8: A program of films from Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Japan. . . . ¶ May 14 at 4: "Papako'lea, A Story of Hawaiian Land" (1993, Edgy Lee) and "Act of War" (1993, Puhipau and Joan Landers). . . . ¶ May 14-15 at 7:30: "Epiphanies" (1994, Richard Kostelanetz). . . . ¶ May 14 at 7: "My Sky, My Home" (1993, Slamet Djarot). . . . ¶ May 14 at 9: "Boatman of the River Padma" (1992, Goutam Ghose). . . . ¶ May 15 at 4: "Puamana" (1991, Les Blank) and "Kaho'olawe: Aloha 'Aina" (1992, Landers). . . . ¶ May 15 at 6: "The Cyclist" (1989, Mohsen Makhmalbaf). . . . ¶ May 15 at 8: "Women from the Lake of Scented Souls" (1992, Xie Fei). . . . ¶ May 16 at 8: "Sopyonje" (1993, Im Kwon-taek).

MOVIES IN BRIEF

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

The Conviction—Two strangers (a man and a woman) spend the night in a locked museum. The woman files a rape charge, and the subsequent trial becomes an exploration of sex, lies, and coercion. With Claire Nebout and Vittorio Mezzogiorno. Directed by Marco Bellocchio. In Italian. Opening May 13.

Crooklyn—Spike Lee's new film, a nostalgia trip back to the gentler world of the early seventies, chronicles several months in the lives of a Brooklyn family and their neighbors. With Alfre Woodard, Delroy Lindo, Zelda Harris, and Spike Lee (sporting an Afro, as a glue-sniffing loser named Snuffy). Lee wrote the script with Joie Susannah Lee and Cinqué Lee. Opening May 13.

The Crow—A murdered rocker (Brandon Lee) returns from the dead to seek revenge on his killers. With Michael Wincott, Ernie Hudson, and Rochelle Davis. The screenplay, by David J. Schow and John Shirley, is based on the underground comic book "The Crow." Directed by Alex Proyas. Opening May 11.

Trading Mom—Three unhappy kids (Anna Chlumsky, Aaron Michael Metchik, and Asher Metchik) are given three chances to trade in their single mother (Sissy Spacek) for the mom of their dreams. The director, Tia Brelis, adapted the screenplay from the children's novel "The Mummy Market," by her mother, Nancy Brelis. With Maureen Stapleton and André the Giant. Opening May 13.

Widow's Peak—Mia Farrow, Joan Plowright, and Natasha Richardson star in this drama, set in an Irish resort during the twenties, about petty rivalries that get out of hand. With Adrian Dunbar and Jim Broadbent. Written by Hugh Leonard and directed by John Irvin. Opening May 13.

CURRENT FILMS

(The following notes are by Anthony Lane, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

Backbeat—Iain Softley's movie tells the story of Stuart Sutcliffe (Stephen Dorff), who was John Lennon's best friend at the Liverpool College of Art and, for a short time, the bass player of the Beatles. The picture doesn't quite succeed in turning this obscure sideman into a pop-culture myth in his own right. In the period that the screenplay covers—roughly, from August, 1960, when the group played its first night-club gig in Hamburg, to April, 1962, when Sutcliffe died of a brain hemorrhage—the Beatles were unambiguously John Lennon's band. And, despite all Softley's efforts to deflect our attention to the tragic ironies of Stuart's brief career, Lennon (Ian Hart) dominates the movie, too. When the picture concentrates on Lennon's edgy wit and on the fierce, joyful music that his band is making, it's terrific. But when it focusses on its nominal hero and his love affair with a worldly German bohemian (played by Sheryl Lee) it seems very ordinary.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 4/25/94.) (Angelika Film Center, 34th Street Showplace, and Tower East.)

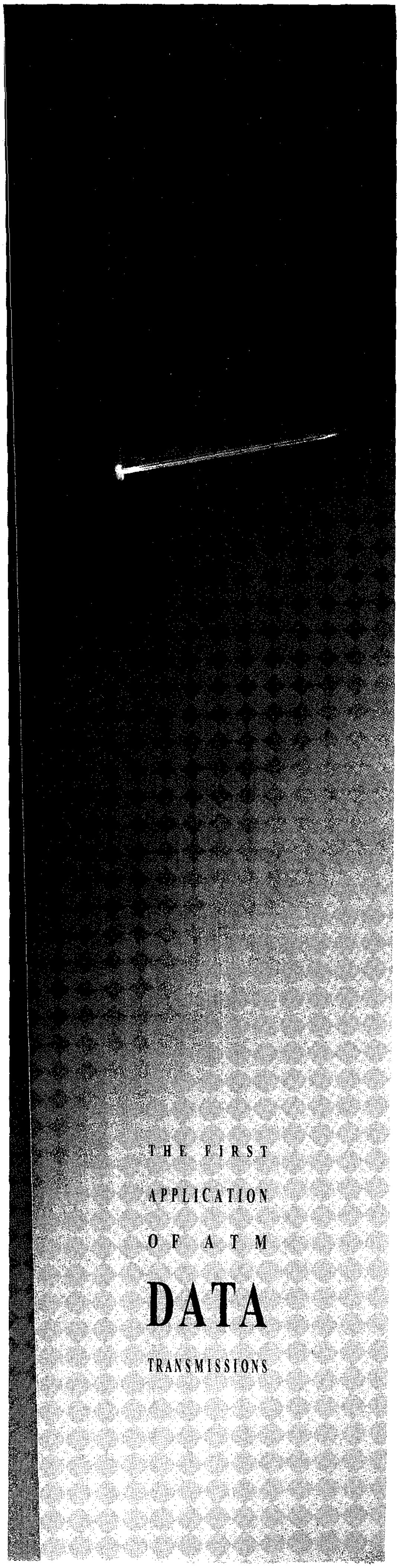
D Girls—Making a Western in which women are the main characters is a perfectly serviceable idea, but this picture's writers, Ken Friedman and Yolande Finch, just take a handful of conventional genre motifs and plug women into the slots that men have usually filled. This lazy approach makes the whole notion of a female Western seem like a stunt, a novelty act—and a dull-spirited one, at that. The fun of watching a gang of stunning prostitutes-turned-gunslingers (Madeleine Stowe, Mary Stuart Masterson, Drew Barrymore, and Andie MacDowell) doing lots of violent, tough-guy stuff wears off quickly, because there's no story to speak of. The director, Jonathan Kaplan, tries, and fails, to keep things lively by sprinkling the action with bizarre allusions to "The Wild Bunch." This movie is about as stimulating as a glass of sarsaparilla. Also with James Russo, Dermot Mulroney, James Le Gros, and Robert Loggia.—T.R. (5/9/94) (Gotham Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Chelsea Cinemas. . . . ¶ Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Metro Cinema, and National Twin; through May 12.)

Bitter Moon—Roman Polanski's rivetingly weird new movie tells the story of two married couples who meet on a cruise ship. Nigel (Hugh Grant) and Fiona (Kristin Scott Thomas), a proper pair of Brits, are obviously a little bored with each other; voluptuous Mimi (Emmanuelle Seigner) and her wheelchair-bound husband, Oscar (Peter Coyote), are locked in a destructive relationship in which their mutual passion can be expressed only as cruelty. Polanski can't quite muster the icy absurdist rigor that made his early pictures so distinctive, and the big erotic set pieces play like an "SCTV" parody of "Last Tango in Paris." The couples' sadistic gamesmanship isn't nearly as disturbing—or as funny—as it should be. Also with Victor Banerjee.—T.R. (4/11/94) (Quad Cinema, and Cinema 3.)

The Blue Kite—A refined, strong-minded political drama, all the more telling for being so quiet. The director, Tian Zhuangzhuang, is just the kind of casual satirist that the Chinese authorities could do without; the movie met fierce official resistance during post-production, and Tian has now been banned from further filming. Here, he smiles at a country awash with banners and slogans, and makes you realize that opposition comes not from more of the same but from the bemused responses of provincial people too busy with their own lives to be led astray. The story begins, in 1953, with the death of Stalin, and lasts until 1967; in that time, a young boy named Tietou grows up and goes through three fathers, each of them laid low by persecution. Tietou may be a pain to his long-suffering mother, but his misbehavior is just the first stirring of a rebellious spirit. The movie seems clean and steady, a corrective to the lushness and extravagance that, for better or worse, has come to be seen as the house style of Chinese cinema. In Mandarin.—A.L. (5/2/94) (Quad Cinema.)

The Favor—The peppy Harley Jane Kozak "has it all" as a wife, mother, and bookkeeper—in picturesque Portland, no less. But before her fifteenth class reunion she fantasizes so intensely about her high-school boyfriend (with whom she never went all the way) that she asks her pal, sultry (and single) Elizabeth McGovern, to seek him out in Denver, sleep with him if possible, and tell her about it—as if that will slake her curiosity. This isn't a premise: it's a millstone, and it sinks an amiable cast. McGovern's best moments come when she fleetingly expresses the audience's disbelief. The one performer to emerge only semi-scathed is Bill Pullman, as Kozak's husband, who's always perched at a computer; Pullman may have turned into the Ralph Bellamy of his generation, but he has a priceless quality—geniality under duress. With Brad Pitt as McGovern's young lover and Ken Wahl as Kozak and McGovern's designated hunk. Donald Petrie directed the script by Sara Parriott and Josann McGibbon.—M.S. (Orpheum VII, and Olympia. . . . ¶ Murray Hill Cinemas, Gemini, and Embassy; through May 12.)

Four Weddings and a Funeral—Everything that depicts nuptial chaos is funny—particularly Rowan Atkinson's self-contained bit as a novice priest who blows a mental fuse during a marriage service and soldiers on with panicky determination. But the central relationship, between a British commitment-phobe (Hugh Grant) and an all too easy American (the flat, inexplicable Andie MacDowell), makes for few sparks and less sense. Grant's goofy charm holds the comedy aloft—he rises like a fuzzy balloon. Mike Newell directed Richard Curtis's script.—M.S. (Vil-



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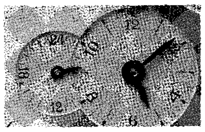

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lage Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, New York Twin, and Columbus Circle.)

THE HOUSE OF THE SPIRITS—Adapted from the novel by Isabel Allende, and directed by Bille August, this movie brings together Jeremy Irons, Meryl Streep, Winona Ryder, Antonio Banderas, and Vanessa Redgrave, and insures that, without exception, they all give their worst performances ever. It all starts in Latin America in the nineteen-twenties, with Irons as Esteban Trueba, a devilish patriarch with a wife (Streep) who is clairvoyant, though strangely unable to see how terrible this movie is going to be. Then there's his creepy sister, played by Glenn Close—the only performer to emerge with a scrap of dignity. One generation down, his errant daughter (Ryder) is torn between thoughtful voice-overs ("Our memory is fragile") and soupy talk with Antonio Banderas: "I love you and you love me, and that's what matters. . . . I hear you've started to make political speeches." And so on, for decades.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center, 59th Street East Cinema, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

KIKA—With Verónica Forqué, Peter Coyote, and Victoria Abril; directed by Pedro Almodóvar. In Spanish. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

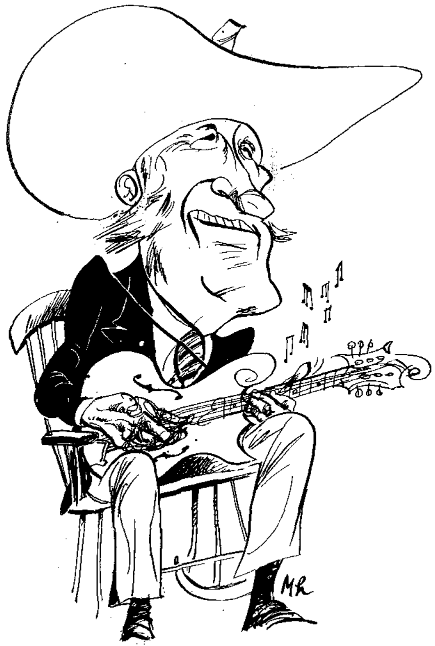
LIKE WATER FOR CHOCOLATE—Alfonso Arau's sticky, lusty, and rather ludicrous movie is set on a Mexican ranch in 1910. The head of the family is the the unyielding Mama Elena (Regina Torne), who determines the destinies of her three daughters. The youngest, Tita (Lumi Cavazos), must stay at home and never marry. Needless to say, she promptly falls in love. It's the old story, passions trying to burst through the shell of repression, and it infects the rest of the film: well-behaved wedding guests suddenly grow weepy or horny, and the old social order is menaced by bands of roaming revolutionaries. But what should be a struggle turns into a giggle; Arau's style loses its balance, swooning into endless closeups of damp brows and heaving bosoms. Scripted by Laura Esquivel from her own novel. In Spanish.—A.L. (Village East Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

NO ESCAPE—Martin Campbell's futuristic adventure story, set in a penal colony on a remote jungle island, is a movie about, and for, desperate men. On its own terms, it's an exciting picture, with plenty of brawny action scenes, and teen-age boys will probably have a great time. Grownups, distracted by the erratic acting and the simple-minded script (by Michael Gaylin and Joel Gross), may not be able to give themselves over completely to the movie's chases and battles and eyeball-to-eyeball macho confrontations. By the end of this savage, hairy-chested spectacle, you're dead tired from trying not to think. With Ray Liotta, Lance Henriksen, Stuart Wilson, Ernie Hudson, Kevin Dillon, and Ian McNeice. The imaginative cinematography is by Phil Meheux.—T.R. (5/9/94) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

PCU—This comic-strip look at a politically correct university—fictional Port Chester U.—fritters away its juicy satirical topic with broad sight gags and hit-or-miss wisecracks. It pits a latter-day Animal House against vegetarians, feminists, Afrocentrists, venomous Wasps, et al., leading up to the bogus and reassuring message that kids just wanna have fun. Jeremy Piven is disappointing as the leader of the pack; he's not as good at being pushy as he was at being furtive and dissembling as a regular on HBO's "The Larry Sanders Show." With David Spade, Jessica Walter, Megan Ward, Chris Young, and a refreshing appearance by George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic. Screenplay by Adam Leff and Zak Penn; Hart Bochner makes his feature-directing début.—M.S. (Orpheum VII. . . . ¶ Criterion Center; through May 12.)

Red Rock West—This clever thriller about a good-hearted loner (Nicolas Cage) who trips and falls into a murder plot ranks tops among low-budget neo-noirs. Taut and deadpan witty, it makes spooky use of the setting—a small, windblown Western town—and its surprises actually add up: for once, an angular narrative serves to sharpen the characters. Dennis Hopper and J. T. Walsh do their freshest, snappiest work in years, and Lara Flynn Boyle is a tense, ambiguous love object. Cage's shaggy hangdog charm and core of intelligence and rectitude keep the audience rooting for the hero after several dumb moves. John Dahl's direction, like the script he wrote with his brother Rick, is sure and economical. Dwight Yoakam contributes a piquant cameo as a tough, helpful truck driver.—M.S. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Serial Mom—John Waters takes a risk and goes mainstream for his latest stab at zero-taste comedy. Kathleen Turner plays Beverly, a Baltimore housewife with a dentist husband (Sam Waterston), two nice kids, and a sideline in multiple murder. Turner looks inspired, even when running someone through with a poker, but there's nothing behind the inspiration; the movie doesn't bother to saddle her slayings with a motive, or grace them with much of a plot. Waters rigs the look of it, and makes things easy for himself; when life has the silly shine of a fifties commercial, you don't have to dig very deep to find dirt. The film is neither as funny nor as shocking as Waters might like to think, but Turner rescues it; she enjoys herself hugely, and hauls us along for the ride. Her sex-bomb charge may be defused, but her career as a queen bitch is just beginning.—A.L. (5/2/94) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)



At Angelika 57, Bill Monroe in "High Lonesome: The Story of Bluegrass Music."

MARCELLUS HALL

Sirens—John Duigan's smug period comedy was inspired by the life of painter Norman Lindsay (Sam Neill). Set in Australia's Blue Mountains in the thirties, it lavishes attention on Lindsay's nude models, who are amazons with attitude (bohemian, feminist, and Marxist); when an Anglican priest (Hugh Grant) tries to get Lindsay to withdraw a blasphemous art work from a touring exhibition, they twit the priest and sexually liberate his wife (Tara Fitzgerald). Duigan's view of pagan sensuality is so uncomplicated that it's lulling. Duigan ultimately reduces Elle Macpherson and Kate Fischer (as Lindsay's top models), Pamela Rabe (as his model-wife), and Portia de Rossi (as a servant turned model who sheds her inhibitions) to human topography; his design is realized when he poses them and Fitzgerald naked on a ridge.—M.S. (Angelika Film Center, Murray Hill Cinemas, 68th St. Playhouse, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

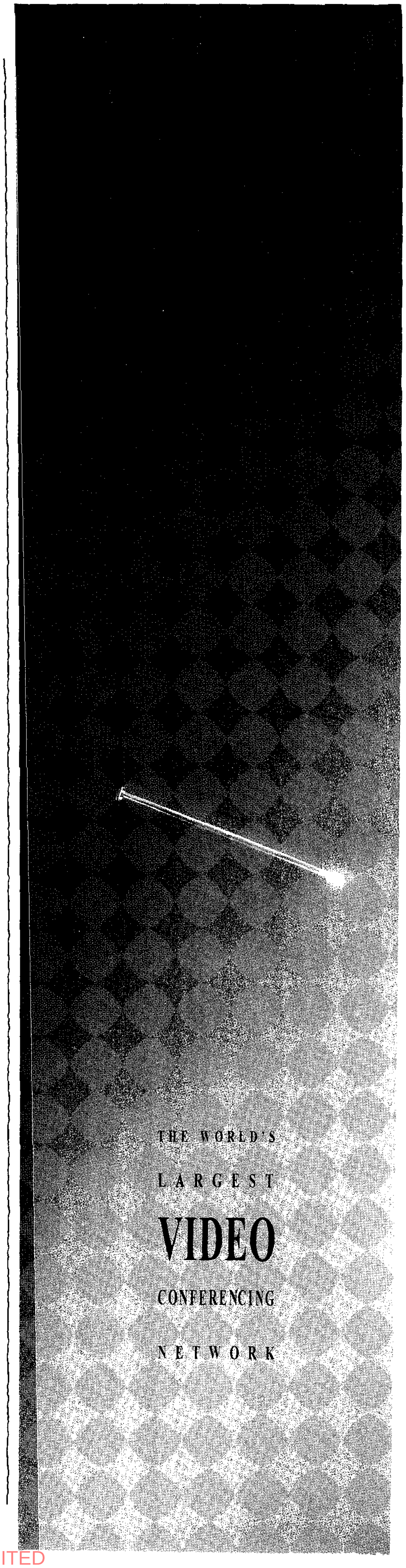
Sunday's Children—Daniel Bergman's film—which is based on an autobiographical novel by his famous father, Ingmar—is mostly set in and around a summerhouse in the late twenties, and the picture has a lazy, daydreamy rhythm. There's no narrative momentum to speak of: all that holds the story together is the muddled consciousness of its protagonist, eight-year-old Ingmar (Henrik Linnros), nicknamed Pu, who's trying—and largely failing—to understand the sensations that seem to come at him from everywhere. Daniel Bergman gives this rambling memoir a shimmering, lyrical clarity, and his direction of the actors is extraordinary; he gets a superb performance from Thommy Berggren, who plays Pu's minister father, Erik. In Swedish.—T.R. (4/25/94) (Film Forum.)

A Tale of Winter—The second film in Eric Rohmer's current cycle, "Tales of the Four Seasons" (the first, "A Tale of Springtime," was released here in 1992), is, as usual, a slow, closely observed story of romantic indecisiveness. The heroine, Félicie (Charlotte Véry), is an irritating woman, of the sort that Rohmer often treats with great tenderness: she keeps two ardent suitors at arm's length while she clings to the faint possibility of a reunion with a long-lost love. She's so stubbornly idealistic that she can't accept the imperfect joys available to her. It's Rohmer's pleasure to reward her for her fanaticism and her irrational patience. His aesthetic philosophy is to stake out, and hold, a position from which he can ambush the rare life-altering event, the moment of grace, the miracle. He captures one of those at the end of this picture, and you smile at its aptness and its beauty. In French.—T.R. (4/11/94) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

That's Entertainment! III—Directed by Bud Friedgen and Michael J. Sheridan. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Ziegfeld.)

Thirty Two Short Films About Glenn Gould—Glenn Gould, as scorned and revered as any figure in modern music, died in 1982. François Girard's new movie honors his strong-willed, idiosyncratic genius with a suitably offbeat approach: a bunch of little films, none lasting more than a few minutes, all of them angling for a new take on the pianist's life and work—thirty-two ways of looking at Glenn Gould. Scenes from his boyhood and professional career are neatly dramatized; the Canadian actor Colm Feore plays the adult Gould, though he never, thank goodness, tries to reproduce his manner at the keyboard. In between come interviews, dashes of animation, and even a sequence shot in X-ray. The finale—a Gould recording of Bach is carried into deep space by a Voyager spacecraft—leaves you gawking.—A.L. (4/18/94) (Angelika Film Center, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

With Honors—Shameless. It's like "Love Story," "The Fisher King," "The Paper Chase," "Dead Poets Society," and "Scent of a Woman" diced together in a Veg-O-Matic. Joe Pesci plays a feisty homeless man who thwarts Harvard senior Brendan Fraser's pursuit of a summa. He becomes the father Fraser never got to know; Fraser becomes the son Pesci never got to know. Pesci is a quick thinker, able to silence a blowhard professor (Gore Vidal) in a single spiel. The director, Alek Keshishian ("Truth or Dare"), and the screenwriter, William Mastrosimone, ply cheap, fraudulent emotions. One minute the students fear Vidal, the next they diss him by cheering Pesci's put-downs. With Moira Kelly, Patrick Dempsey, and Josh Hamilton as Fraser's roommates.—M.S. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, New York Twin, Orpheum VII,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IN BRIEF–Cont'd

Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

The Wonderful, Horrible Life of Leni Riefenstahl—This German documentary is a profoundly unsettling three hours at the movies. Riefenstahl, now ninety-one years old, made two brilliant documentaries—"Triumph of the Will" (1935) and "Olympia" (1938)—under the aegis of the Nazi Party. She was known as "Hitler's favorite filmmaker," but has always insisted that her movies were never meant to advance a political program—that she looked at contemporary events with the pure, disinterested eye of an artist. Subjected to on-camera interrogation by this film's director, Ray Müller, she sticks to that story. If you believe her, she's one kind of monster; if you don't, she's another. The juxtaposition of her grotesque apologia with clips from her grandiose, strikingly composed films makes for a bizarre and sobering spectacle. In German.—T.R. (3/28/94) (Film Forum.)

You So Crazy—Underneath his alarming confidence—what makes him so sure he can hold an audience in the sweaty palm of his hand?—Martin Lawrence is just a run-of-the-mill club comic, and his concert film is a wearying collection of routine routines. He uses gutter epithets to charge up commonplace attitudes. Lawrence is the comedian for those who are willing to settle for updated versions of old jokes about guys going out with the boys or expecting their gals to have dinner ready. There's no jazz scat to his scatology. And he raps out everything at the same emotional pitch, whether he's praising his mother's strength or riffing on yeast infections. Directed by Thomas Schlamme.—M.S. (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and Embassy.)

REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Michael Sragow.)

Anatomy of a Murder (1959)—It's more like "Lingerie of a Murder"—much of the hundred-and-sixty-minute running time is taken up with debates over Lee Remick's panties. Sweetly feckless and sexy, Remick is the wife of an Army lieutenant (Ben Gazzara) who killed a man for raping her. James Stewart stars as the husband's wily defense lawyer; Arthur O'Connell is his tippling partner, Eve Arden his dry-witted secretary, and George C. Scott his slickest prosecutorial opponent. Otto Preminger's courtroom drama is jumbo-sized and gimmicky (Joseph N. Welch, the hero of the Senate McCarthy hearings, plays the judge), and the controversies over its frank discussion of rape evaporated long ago. But the movie is still surprisingly absorbing. Stewart gives one of his best homey star performances—watching him match wits with experts at intensity like Gazzara and Scott is a hoot. Wendell Mayes adapted the novel by Robert Traver (the pseudonym for John Voelker, a retired judge on Michigan's Upper Peninsula).—M.S. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 12.)

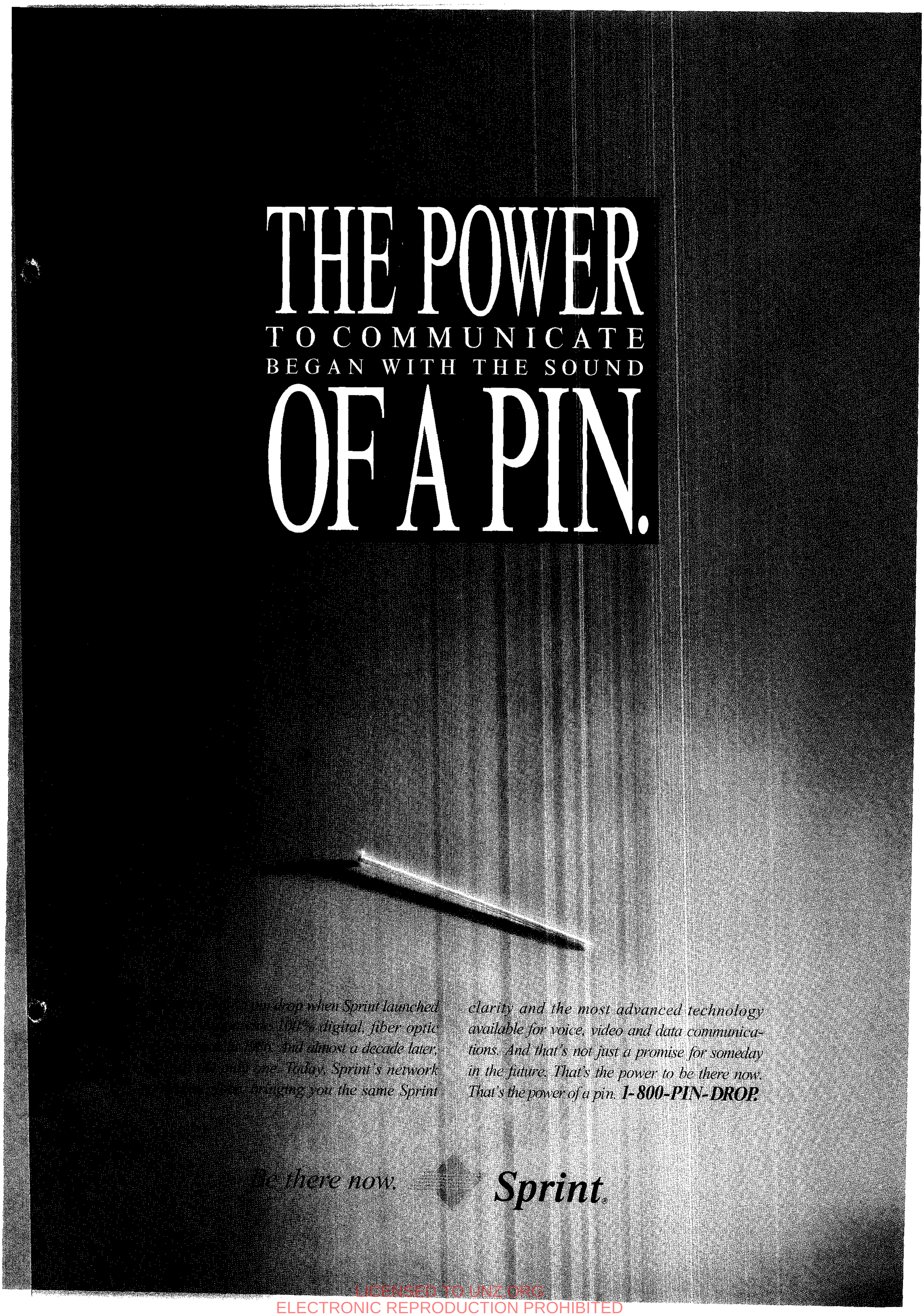
Arsène Lupin (1932)—John Barrymore as a suave gentleman thief who poses as a duke in Paris in order to fleece the rich; his techniques are suspiciously easy—at one point he saunters out of the Louvre with the "Mona Lisa" tucked under his arm, wrapped around an umbrella. Lionel Barrymore plays an agonized, limping detective on the light-hearted thief's trail. The contrast should be more entertaining than it is. This was the Barrymore brothers' first film together and John gets to show a little of his humor but Lionel was already making a profession out of crankiness. The movie is mildly amusing in spots but it isn't much fun. Directed by Jack Conway. From the play by Maurice Le Blanc and Francis de Croisset, adapted by Carey Wilson, with dialogue by Bayard Veiller and Lenore Coffee. With Karen Morley, John Miljan, and Tully Marshall.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 12.)

Bizet's Carmen (1984)—Directed by Francesco Rosi, this version has a clean, raw vivacity and is supremely romantic. Julia Migenes-Johnson's freckled street urchin Carmen revitalizes the story. Her strutting, her dark, messy frizzy hair—her sexual availability—attract the middle-class clod Don José (Plácido Domingo) and drive him crazy; Carmen, who's true to her instincts, represents everything he tries to repress. Rosi lets the music carry the passion; what he supplies is ideal conditions for the viewer to experience the opera as a totality. The natural settings have an extra, formal dimension: the lustre of nineteenth-century paintings with the near-abstract clarity of twentieth-century art. Rosi's handling suggests the most fluently stylized movie musicals. With Faith Esham as Micaëla and Ruggero Raimondi as Escamillo. In French.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; May 13.)

Breaking Away (1979)—The airily goofy hero (Dennis Christopher) is a Bloomington, Indiana, bicyclist who models himself after the victorious Italians he reads about in sports magazines. To the dismay of his father (Paul Dooley), he shaves his legs because the champs do. He even gets his mother (Barbara Barrie) to cook what Dooley calls " 'ini' food. Zucchini. Fettuccini." When Christopher and three other aimless nineteen-year-olds—Dennis Quaid, Daniel Stern, and Jackie Earle Haley—compete against the campus big shots of Indiana University in a bicycle race, they fight for the dignity of all "cutters" (as townies are called here, because the main blue-collar industry is quarrying). The ensemble exudes a warm, lived-in silliness. Directed by an Englishman, Peter Yates, and written by a Yugoslav immigrant, Steve Tesich, this mirthful and touching picture is a modest marvel of wit, construction, and empathy. It shows how Old World grace can flower in unlikely spots—how fantasizing about Europe can humanize Americans.—M.S. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 17.)

Cabaret (1972)—A great movie musical. Taking its form from political cabaret, it's a satire of temptations. In a prodigious balancing act, Bob Fosse, the choreographer-director, keeps the period—Berlin, 1931—at a cool distance. We see the decadence as garish and sleazy; yet we also see the animal energy in it—everything seems to become sexualized. The movie does not exploit decadence; rather, it gives it its due. With Joel Grey as our devil-doll host—the master of ceremonies—and Liza Minnelli (in her first singing role on the screen) as exuberant, corruptible Sally Bowles, chasing after the life of a headliner no matter what; Minnelli has such gaiety and electricity that she becomes a star before our eyes. From Christopher Isherwood's "Goodbye to Berlin" stories, via the play and movie of "I Am a Camera," and the Broadway musical "Cabaret," which has been adapted for the screen by Jay Presson Allen, with the assistance of Hugh Wheeler. The metallic songs, by John Kander and Fred Ebb, have a distinctive acrid flavor.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; starting May 13.)

The Paper Chase (1973)—Blurry Timothy Bottoms, looking like a romantic anarchist who has lost his bombs, as a first-year law student at Harvard, and John Houseman as the professor he idolizes. Bottoms meets the professor's daughter (Lindsay Wagner), who's derisive about everything, and he becomes confused about why he's studying. The picture, written and directed by James Bridges, tries to be thoughtful and provocative, but it has nothing to say. Houseman shines because he's the only one who suggests that he was formed by experience. He brings it his air of eminence, and the film led to a TV series featuring him. Cinematography by Gordon Willis; music by John Williams.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; May 17.)



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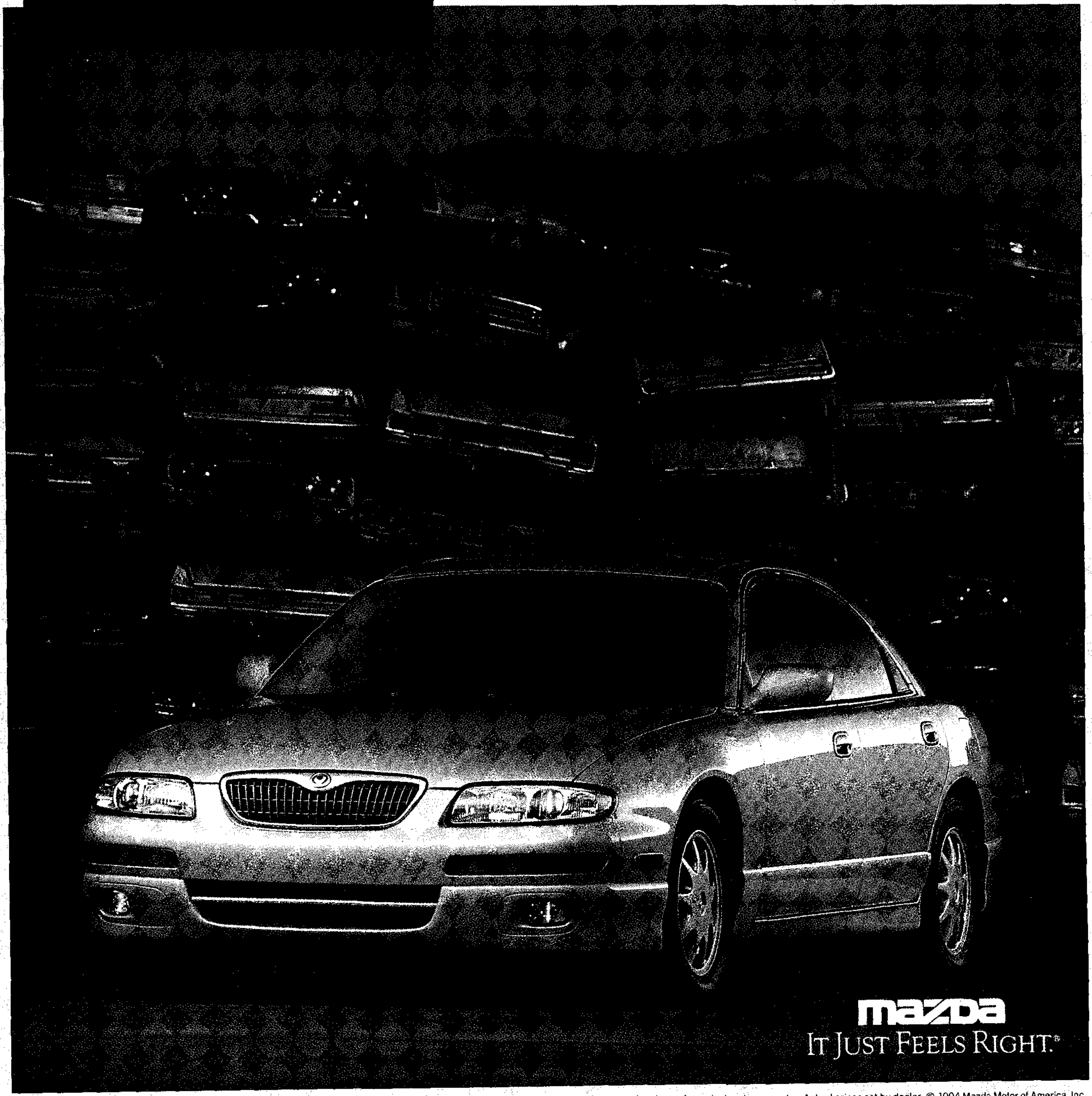

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THE
NEW YORKER

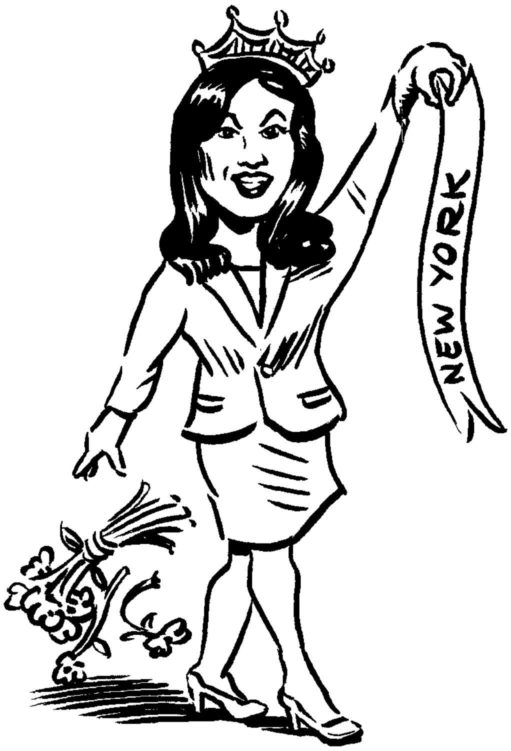
THE TALK OF THE TOWN

MISS NEW YORK WILL NOT MISS THE JOB

When you are Miss New York, your job is to be agreeable. This presented a problem for Marcia Cillan, Miss New York 1993. Later this month, she will relinquish her crown to Miss New York 1994, at the Miss New York State Scholarship Pageant, in Watertown, upstate, and it is safe to say that the succession will occur not a moment too soon for Ms. Cillan. "I love everything that being Miss New York stands for," she says. "It's just that I've gone through hell to be it."

The reason Ms. Cillan is not a happy Miss New York is that when she won the title last spring she was already happy with her job. She was working on Wall Street for J. P. Morgan, in the kind of fast-track position that any twenty-four-year-old with an interest in international marketing, corporate liquidity, and custodial accounts would kill for. Her job came with clients, a fancy computer, and a future. But it was a job that the Miss New York officials wanted her to give up. In March of last year, when she entered the pageant, she signed (rather heedlessly, she maintains) a contract saying that if she became Miss New York she would live near the pageant headquarters in Watertown, which is in the rural Thousand Islands region—about a six-hour drive from Manhattan. The pageant officials take the contract seriously. As the pageant's executive director, Joan Jones, puts it, "if she wanted to stay at J. P. Morgan, she should have been up front with us."

Seated in her cubicle the other day at J. P. Morgan's Wall Street offices, Ms. Cillan told us, in an up-front kind of way, "I am going to go down in history as the bad Miss New York." Ms. Cillan, who is of Filipino-Thai-Chinese descent, has a heart-shaped face that would have attracted Gauguin. She was wearing a black suit with a short skirt; onyx earrings; and the sort of high heels you must be exceedingly poised to carry off without looking like—to use a favorite phrase of Ms. Cillan's—"a dumb beauty queen." (She carried it off.) Ms. Cillan explained that she'd gone the pageant route mostly for the money—money she needed to pay for her education. She'd entered her first pageant when she was a high-school junior in Washington state. She'd kept it up through her college years at Georgetown. And, with thousands of dollars in student loans outstanding, she'd continued to compete in pageants after moving here, and had won the Miss Manhattan contest early last year. (Last fall, as Miss New York, she participated in the Miss America pageant, but failed to make the finals.)

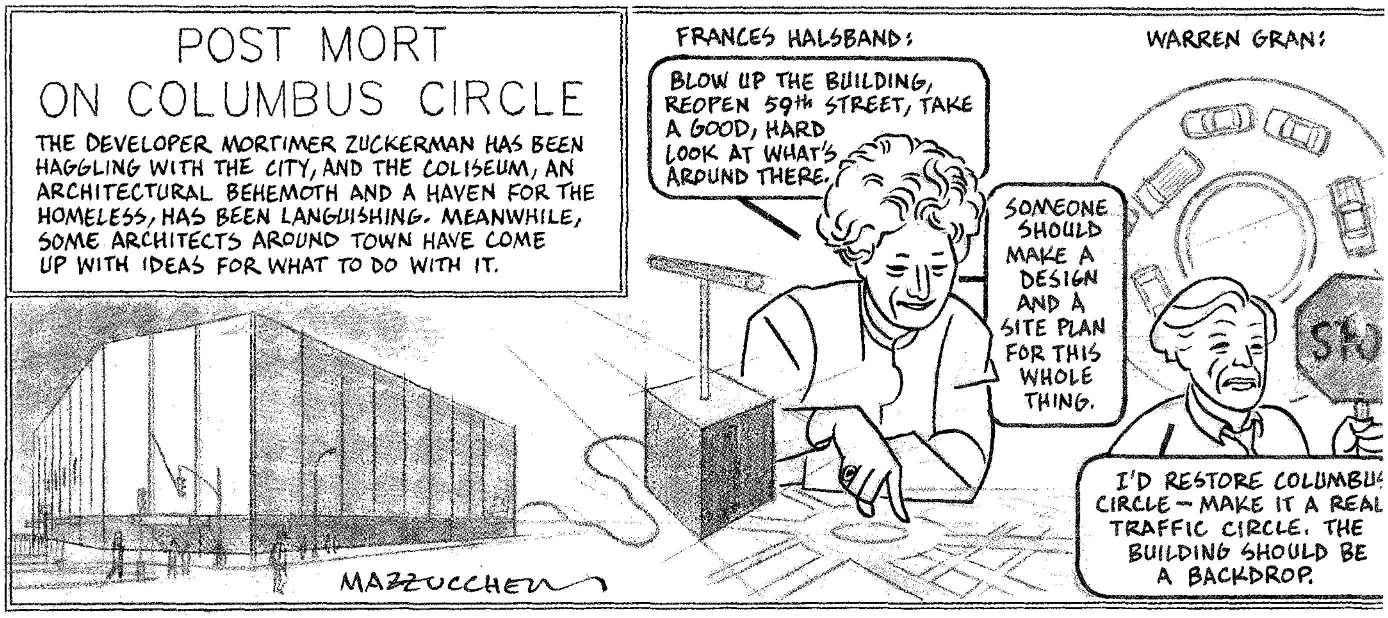


She went on to say that, along with her Miss New York crown, she received from the pageant officials an offer of room and board in the house of a middle-aged couple in Watertown, some clothes, and an uncertain income from yet to be scheduled appearances at store openings and schools and Elks lodges. She did a quick cost-benefit analysis, and also factored in that when she competed for Miss New York her platform was "Women Mean Business." She immediately began to feel less than agreeable, a feeling that she expressed to the pageant board at a meeting in Watertown one afternoon six weeks after her coronation.

"I asked, 'Can you promise me a steady income, so I can pay my student loans? Is there health insurance?' The answer was no," Ms. Cillan recalled. "I said I wasn't going to live in Watertown. There must have been fifteen people at the meeting who proceeded to hassle me. I was literally yelled at. They said they'd revoke my crown."

Ms. Cillan nevertheless refused to budge from her apartment in the city, and the board never did with-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY DOUG ALLEN


POST MORT ON COLUMBUS CIRCLE
THE DEVELOPER MORTIMER ZUCKERMAN HAS BEEN HAGGLING WITH THE CITY, AND THE COLISEUM, AN ARCHITECTURAL BEHEMOTH AND A HAVEN FOR THE HOMELESS, HAS BEEN LANGUISHING. MEANWHILE, SOME ARCHITECTS AROUND TOWN HAVE COME UP WITH IDEAS FOR WHAT TO DO WITH IT.
FRANCES HALSBAND:
BLOW UP THE BUILDING, REOPEN 59th STREET, TAKE A GOOD, HARD LOOK AT WHAT'S AROUND THERE.
SOMEONE SHOULD MAKE A DESIGN AND A SITE PLAN FOR THIS WHOLE THING.
WARREN GRAN:
I'D RESTORE COLUMBUS CIRCLE—MAKE IT A REAL TRAFFIC CIRCLE. THE BUILDING SHOULD BE A BACKDROP.
MAZZUCCHELLI

draw her crown. But, she told us, although she has shown up at the appearances it arranged, and until now has promoted only an upbeat image of the Miss America program, she feels she has not had the board's support. "All year, I've gotten the cold shoulder," she said.

Ms. Cillan picked up from the floor under her desk a canvas bag that held her crown, and said it was time for her to make an appearance at P.S. 42, in Chinatown. We went along, and watched her pin her crown on in the principal's bathroom. She told us how important it is to her to show Asian children that an Asian woman can be intelligent, accomplished, and famous. "Asian kids don't speak up," she said. "I'm outspoken. I'm angry about Watertown because these people said they wanted to promote a woman with a voice, but they wanted me to give up what I stand for."

She entered the auditorium and greeted the children (grades four through six). A drug-prevention group had invited her to speak, so she talked for a while about why kids should stay away from drugs, cigarettes, and alcohol. She also encouraged those in the audience to read up on current events, go to college, and always ask questions.

"Is your crown real?" one boy asked.

"Yes. Real rhinestones," she replied.

There was a lot of whispering and shuffling. "Ask anything," Ms. Cillan urged. "There's no such thing as a stupid question."

Finally, a small voice piped up: "Do you know how to skateboard?"

She said yes and smiled agreeably.

COURTLY

If you were six feet eight, weighed two hundred and twenty-five pounds, had a shaved head, had just posted up in the box, then had double-pumped and gone up for the jam only to be rejected by Derrick Coleman, you might very well shout . . . well, you might very well *mention* . . . well, you might just mutter whatever you had been planning to shout, with a minimum of mouth-moving, to avoid a technical foul for trash-talking. Good move. O.K., say you were immense on defense but Kenny Anderson nonetheless managed to penetrate into the lane and dish off, you would probably pound your fist on your thigh and scream . . . well, *whatever* it was that you were planning to scream, you would deliver sotto voce, so you wouldn't rack up another technical and get thrown out. If you didn't play at all but you happened to be sitting under one of the baskets with the photographers during the Knicks-Nets playoff games last week, you could hear a lot of this pianissimo remonstration, colloquy, and ardent dialogue—not from your own trashy mouth, of course, because you weren't playing, but from the mouth of everyone on the court.

In fact, everyone was talking about talking as the playoffs got under way. Trash-talking—disrespectful, captious, provocative commentary made by one player to another regarding, say, his shot selection, his strength under the basket, his speed off the dribble, or his mom—used to be considered a skill, like ball-handling. Now it is a technical foul. After the Miami Heat–Atlanta Hawks brawl earlier this month—sparked by a trash discussion and followed by fat fines and suspensions—it wouldn't have been a surprise if the Knicks-Nets square-off turned into the most clammed-up playoff series in N.B.A. history.

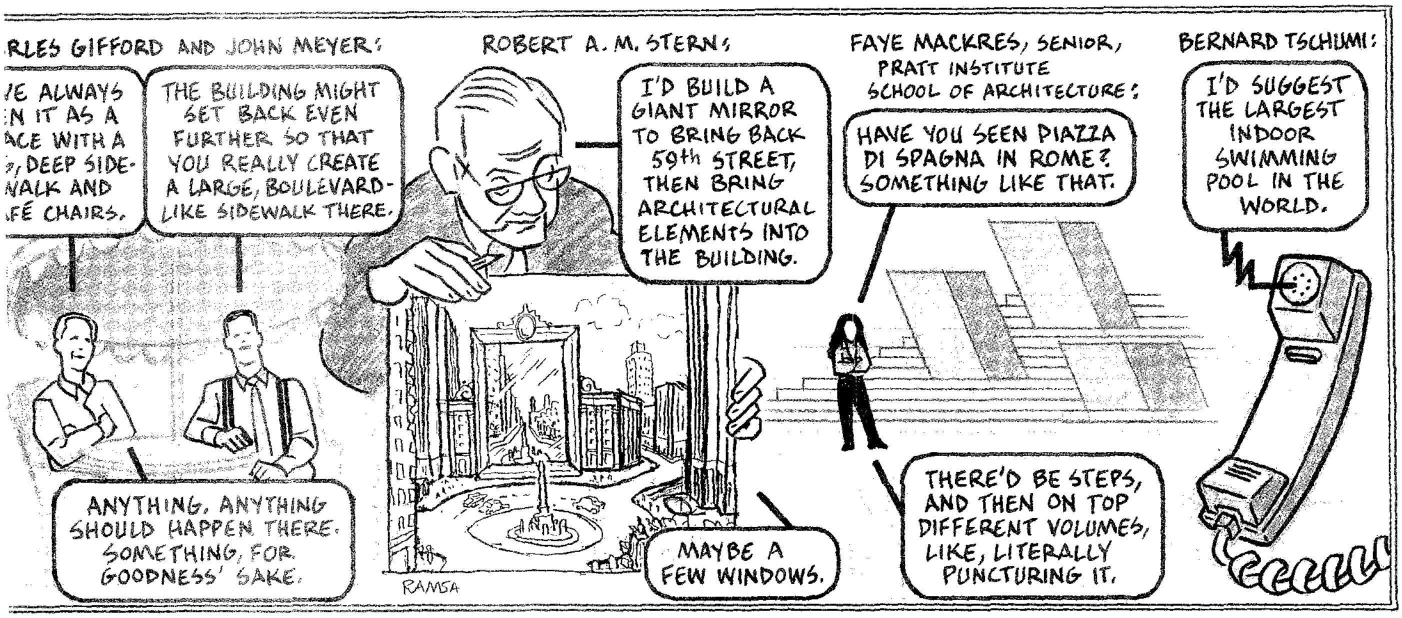
Not so. It was actually *noisy* down on the floor. You heard the shrieky squeak of soles on polished wood, a lot of thudding flesh, a lot of groans, and a chorus of gasps—not trash gasps but genuine physical-exertion gasps. Also, you heard plenty of non-trash-talking. There was post-play analysis, for instance. On Sunday—Game Two—when Anthony Mason took a one-foot jumper, missed, got the ball back, quadruple-pumped, and was rejected by P. J. Brown with less than four minutes left in the second quarter, several people had something they wanted to say.

"Aw, shit," Mason said.

"Aw, shit," John Starks said.

"Shit, yes!" Brown said, spanking the closest Nets butt.

Pat Riley, who on television looks intense and given to few words, usually


RLES GIFFORD AND JOHN MEYER:
E ALWAYS N IT AS A ACE WITH A , DEEP SIDE-ALK AND FÉ CHAIRS.
THE BUILDING MIGHT SET BACK EVEN FURTHER SO THAT YOU REALLY CREATE A LARGE, BOULEVARD-LIKE SIDEWALK THERE.
ANYTHING. ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN THERE. SOMETHING, FOR GOODNESS' SAKE.
ROBERT A. M. STERN:
I'D BUILD A GIANT MIRROR TO BRING BACK 59th STREET, THEN BRING ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS INTO THE BUILDING.
MAYBE A FEW WINDOWS.
RAMSA
FAYE MACKRES, SENIOR, PRATT INSTITUTE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE:
HAVE YOU SEEN PIAZZA DI SPAGNA IN ROME? SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THERE'D BE STEPS, AND THEN ON TOP DIFFERENT VOLUMES, LIKE, LITERALLY PUNCTURING IT.
BERNARD TSCHUMI:
I'D SUGGEST THE LARGEST INDOOR SWIMMING POOL IN THE WORLD.

is—mostly he paces, poses, does his I-just-drank-milk-that-was-past-its-expiration-date grimace, and freezes with his hands on his skinny hips—but, once a quarter or so, he, too, makes noise. In Game Two, during the third quarter, he started giving furious jabbing hand signals and yelling "Oak! Oak! Oak! One! One! *One!*" Charles Oakley, who had been heading downcourt, stopped in mid-stride, pivoted to look at Riley, wrinkled his forehead, and said "What?"

While Herb Williams, the Knicks' backup center, is sitting on the bench, he's likely to be louder than Riley. On Wednesday (Game Three), when the Knicks went to New Jersey thinking (wrongly, as it turned out) that they were about to close out the series, Herb had some backup coaching suggestions. For Anthony Mason: "Go to work, Mason! Go to work! Work! Work! *Work!*" For Derek Harper: "Put pressure on, baby! What's he doing? He's been like that all night! Come on, pressure, baby! Work!" For Charles Oakley, who was about to rush a shot: "You got to wait, baby! Wait! Wait! Wait! Wait! Wait! Wait!" But Oakley decided not to wait. No basket. Herb, sighing deeply: "Oh, baby, baby, baby, I told you, you got to *wait.*"

IT'S A BLACK MALE THING

Spike is looking for Strike. That is, Spike Lee, the director, is looking for just the right kind of guy to play Strike, the nineteen-year-old cocaine dealer in his next movie, which will be based on Richard Price's novel "Clockers," which, in turn, was based on a lot of real cops-and-drug-hustlers stuff that went down in Jersey City. To get specific, as Spike did, he is looking for "a seventeen-to-twenty-two-year-old streetwise African-American male," and, if you think he isn't looking hard, then you weren't at P.S. 9, at Eighty-fourth Street and Columbus Avenue, on a recent Saturday. If you had been, you would know that his production-company people saw about fourteen hundred streetwise African-American males in an open audition that lasted nearly all day.

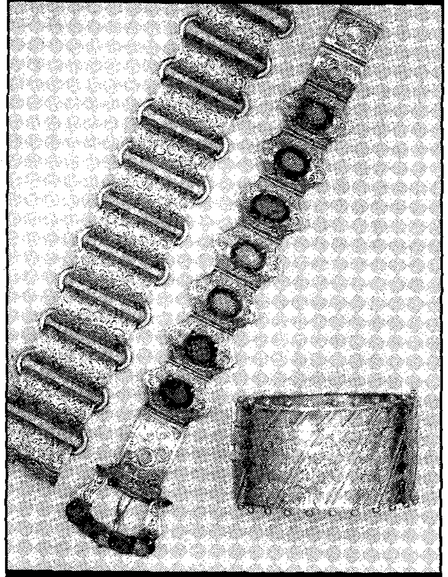
The audition was not open to anyone who was not a streetwise African-American male, but in midafternoon a line of African-American streetwise males wound from the door of the school well down the block, and that gave us a chance to talk a little with some of those who'd heard about the audition (mostly because it was mentioned on WBLS, the city's big "urban music" station) and thought they might be just what Spike was looking for.

There was Ekrem, a tall twenty-year-old in saggy jeans, a down vest, and untied hiking boots, originally from Brooklyn and now studying at SUNY Purchase: "You got to be in clime with the streets, but you've also got to get that education, so you can know where you're coming from," he said. "I heard about it on the radio. I was, like, 'Word,' so I just come down to give it a try and see what's up, you know? The way he films his movies—it's like real life, know what I'm sayin'?"

Robert, who is twenty-two and plays a lot of tennis, had on a bright, multicolored sweatsuit. He had already done some acting, but he thought it was other aspects of his background that would help him get into the role: "I wouldn't be able to lie to you—I grew up in a pretty nice area. But there was a change in family things, so at the end I've grown up in a rough part. That combines a lot for me, helps me out, because I know the smarts of how you should go in society and the streetwise of how to get by while you're in a rough area."

Paul, who is seventeen and lives in the Bronx, has four lettered gold caps on his top front teeth which spell out his name. His reason for coming to the audition was relatively simple. "A new experience," he said, shrugging. "And I've been mostly around drug dealers—not that I've been one myself."

Jean, who is twenty-two, lives in New Jersey and works for A.T. & T. He was in line with his girlfriend, India. She said that, just like Strike, who in the book is so stressed out that he has to swill vanilla Yoo-Hoo to ease the pain caused by ulcers, Jean has stomach problems. "Yeah, he'd fit right in," she said. "Maalox and everything." ♦



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ANNALS OF CRIME

WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION

The state's star expert in the Joel Rifkin trial is the man who invented the field of medical criminology—and convinced a jury that Jeffrey Dahmer was sane.

BY JOYCE JOHNSON

DR. PARK ELLIOTT DIETZ is the virtuoso expert witness who keeps showing up on Court TV. Known to be masterly in establishing criminal responsibility in homicide cases where insanity is the counter-argument, Dietz has helped the prosecution win in trials involving Jeffrey Dahmer, Arthur Shawcross, and Betty Broderick. When he was asked by the district attorney to testify in the Joel Rifkin trial, in Mineola, Long Island, he agreed to do so under two conditions: that he be paid three thousand dollars a day, to cover travel expenses, and two hundred and fifty dollars an hour, and that he be given full access to all the evidence beforehand. "My duty is to find the truth as best I can," he told the Rifkin jury last Tuesday, when he appeared before them as the final witness in the case.

Dressed in one of the charcoal-gray suits he wears to court, and with a six-hundred-and-forty-seven-page transcript of his four-day interview with Rifkin in front of him, Dr. Dietz seemed perfectly at home on the stand. His smooth-skinned face looked boyish, though at times his unusually wide-set eyes turned chilly and owlish. His preparation had been so thorough, spectators learned, that one night last fall he had asked a police officer to drive him over to the "strolls" in Manhattan and Brooklyn, where Rifkin, a landscape gardener from East Meadow, Long Island, had picked up the prostitutes whom he later strangled and dismembered.

Rifkin listened, hunched over, in his own, ill-fitting gray suit. Eleven months ago, he had crashed his pickup truck into a light pole just in front of the Nassau County courthouse where he was now being tried. When the police caught up with him, they discovered the body of a twenty-two-year-old woman named Tiffany Bresciani under a tarp in the back of the truck. Shortly afterward, Rifkin confessed to killing sixteen other women.

Sometimes Rifkin had dozed off during the testimony of other witnesses. These had included only one brought in by the defense—Dr. Barbara R. Kirwin, a clinical psychologist who until 1986 had worked with violent inmates at the Creedmoor Psychiatric Center. Kirwin, after administering a multiple-choice test, had found that Joel Rifkin scored "off the scale" for paranoid schizophrenia. She contended that the defendant had "an extreme inability to think logically or experience time."

Now Dr. Dietz attempted to show that, despite Rifkin's mental disorders, his criminal behavior had not only been highly organized but his memory of all that he had done was remarkably cogent and precise. For two hours, rarely glancing at his transcript, Dr. Dietz explained that Rifkin had recalled, in the course of their conversations, how he had acted out asphyxiations inspired by a graphic scene in the Hitchcock movie "Frenzy"; how he had dismembered the bodies of his victims in his mother's garage as if they were "Thanksgiving birds"; how he had stuffed the parts into barrels and milk crates, and disposed of them in rivers, culverts, and wooded areas; how he had in some cases driven around in his pickup truck with the corpses straddling him. It was as if the psychiatrist had drained the defendant of his memories and then eerily made them his own. The jurors' faces grew ashen; Rifkin covered his eyes with his hands. Until a spectator sneezed, the voice of the expert witness was the only sound in the courtroom. Dr. Dietz paused and said, "God bless you," then resumed.

When Dr. Dietz had finished for the day, John Lawrence, Rifkin's attorney, had little to say to reporters. He described Dr. Kirwin as a scientist. He conceded that Dr. Dietz had a powerful ability to tell macabre stories: "We knew we'd have to go through this. I'm tired, guys."

THE spectators at the Rifkin trial last week caught only a glimpse of Dr. Dietz's wide-ranging expertise. Over the past decade, Dr. Dietz has become an authority on celebrity-stalkers, product tampering, and workplace violence. In some very important cases, Dr. Dietz's contribution has been nearly invisible to the public, especially when he has worked as a consultant to the F.B.I. or other federal agencies, including the Secret Service and the C.I.A. In August, 1992, he was staked out with the F.B.I.'s hostage-rescue team in the hills of Idaho, advising on negotiations with the survivalist Randy Weaver. Six months later, at the beginning of the standoff with the Branch Davidians, the F.B.I. summoned him to Waco.

Forensic medicine allowed Park Dietz to become a doctor while pursuing his true calling: "to study and spend my time on the strangest of crimes." (Photograph by Laura Wilson.)

I first met Dr. Dietz almost two years ago, at his home, in Newport Beach, California. If you stand on his neat front lawn and gaze down his street, you can see the land end in a steep plunge toward the sea in a frame of brown, parched hills. There are mild tremors in this region: nights when the mirror above the bed suddenly rattles, mornings when Dr. and Mrs. Dietz find all the memorabilia on the walls of the study hanging askew—the medical-school and Ph.D. diplomas, the F.B.I. citations, the marksmanship trophies, the 1986 Krafft-Ebing Award. A locked glass case runs along one wall of the study. It contains a skull, a London policeman's helmet, some antiquarian books on pathology and crime, and a collection of deadly-looking black-handled knives, artistically displayed.

Arriving straight from the airport, I briefly interrupted one of the informal seminars Dr. Dietz was conducting gratis for the benefit of two young women, postdoctoral fellows in forensic psychiatry at U.C.L.A. "He's a walking encyclopedia of crime," one of them told me.

That afternoon, Dietz was discussing a homicide case in which he was about to testify for the prosecution. An eighteen-year-old who had killed a classmate was pleading insanity. One of the defense exhibits that Dietz showed his students was an algebra notebook containing the defendant's "psychotic" drawings. He passed them a second notebook, and one of the women, who had done several years of clinical work with disturbed children, singled out a drawing of a penislike body with a tiny head as particularly indicative of psychosis. Dryly and courteously, Dr. Dietz ambushed her. The second notebook belonged to "a successful, well-adjusted honors student," he said, adding that drawings such as these were exactly the kind of evidence that would not stand up in court. "Stick to facts," he warned her, "or they'll make a monkey out of you."

Dr. Dietz defines his calling as "the psychiatric evaluation and presentation of evidence relevant to the resolution of legal disputes." Forensic psychiatry is still a small field, but it has become increasingly influential as courts have grown more reliant upon such testimony. While his colleagues frequently maintain clinical practices, he himself has no interest in treating patients.

Dr. Dietz's performances on the stand show how sticking to the facts—and avoiding theoretical conjecture—can go a long way in the courts of law. From the fact that Jeffrey Dahmer had to get drunk before he killed and dismembered his seventeen male victims, Dr. Dietz inferred that Dahmer had found those acts aversive—had known he was doing something wrong—and on that basis he was able to convince a Milwaukee jury that Dahmer was sane.

Despite judges' instructions, insanity is a consideration that often confuses jurors, especially after they have heard conflicting psychiatric testimony. The man in the street might say that Jeffrey Dahmer had to be crazy, but the legal distinction between sanity and insanity rests upon the concept of free will. In the traditional legal test of mens rea, or "guilty mind," criminal intent is essential to an illegal act. At issue during the Dahmer trial was the question of whether Dahmer had the capacity to conform his conduct to the requirements of law.

"I've done interviews where inmates have threatened me all day long, spat at me, taken punches at me, tried to bash me over the head with a chair. But Dahmer was a perfect gentleman," Dr. Dietz reflected a year after he and Dahmer spent three days together, locked in a courthouse library. "The tone of much of what we discussed was more like a college counsellor talking to a student about his career plans and course selection than it was like doing psychotherapy or cross-examining a witness."

Dr. Dietz broke into laughter—something he often does when he's discussing the less savory aspects of his inquiries. "It was a straightforward discussion of such details as which way he held the knife when dismembering the body, and how he protected himself from getting acid burns when he was disposing of the acid in which he disintegrated the soft tissues of his victims, and the right temperature settings for properly preserving a skull."

I took a deep breath and asked him whether he'd felt any horror or revulsion, since what he had just communicated was more the feeling of one specialist comparing notes with another.

He admitted to having had a sense of the bizarre. "But no more than I would have driving past a Mormon temple," he said. "There I was, right where I belonged, you see. The personal experience of examining him and being part of that case really had to do with 'This brings it all together.' So"—he was once more unable to suppress his laughter—"I hesitate to call it a treat. But if it weren't for how it sounded, that would be an accurate term."

He reminded me that not many other people had an extensive library of technical books on murder, cannibalism, dismemberment, bondage, and necrophilia. "It was not at all a difficult interview," he explained. "By the time I went in, I knew everything about people who did every aspect of what Dahmer did. But there were things that weren't already in the data that only he could answer, and he answered every one. Articulately, willingly, with curiosity himself. He was as curious as I was about how these things came to be."

When Dr. Dietz talks about his own development, he often does so with the detachment of a social scientist. He grew up in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, which he described to me as a conservative, middle-class Republican community, where life centered on the country club, and where a psychopathic teen-ager who was later implicated in a rape gave him his first look at a switchblade. It was "basically a very parochial town, which, like any other, explicitly condemned any kind of deviation from accepted traditional values but, at the same time, behind the scenes, had all the things that any town has in the way of perversions and crimes and secrets and mistrusts and you name it."

Dietz's father, a general practitioner, was "pessimistic and hypercritical," and never left his son in any doubt of what was expected of him. Park suppressed his yearnings to become a rock drummer, because he knew that his future as a medical specialist was preordained—that he would go to Harvard or Johns Hopkins, where "gods walked the corridors," and become one of those gods in white himself.

While he was still in grade school, his father undertook the process of inuring him to the spectacles of human suffering that he would later encounter in medical practice, handing him photographs of surgical procedures or of anatomical specimens over the dinner table. He believes that this early training prepared him to look at crime-scene photographs without being distracted by blood. He pointed out to me that, as an emotional defense mechanism, one can learn to isolate affect, but said that for him the most important mechanism "is probably desensitization, simply repeated exposure leading to decreasing emotional response."

Arriving at Cornell University in 1966, Park Dietz was deeply troubled by the heady atmosphere of rebellion he found there. Close friends, even his fraternity brothers and his instructors, were engaging in antiwar protests. He became the president of the Conservatives Club. At the same time, he was drawn to the theatre; he acted and tried his hand at writing plays in the manner of Edward Albee and Samuel Beckett. "To this day," he told me, "every time I'm in the theatre I'm transformed." The trials where he now appears in such pivotal roles are also, of course, a highly stylized kind of theatre; one of his F.B.I. colleagues once referred to them as "something that we play out on a big stage."

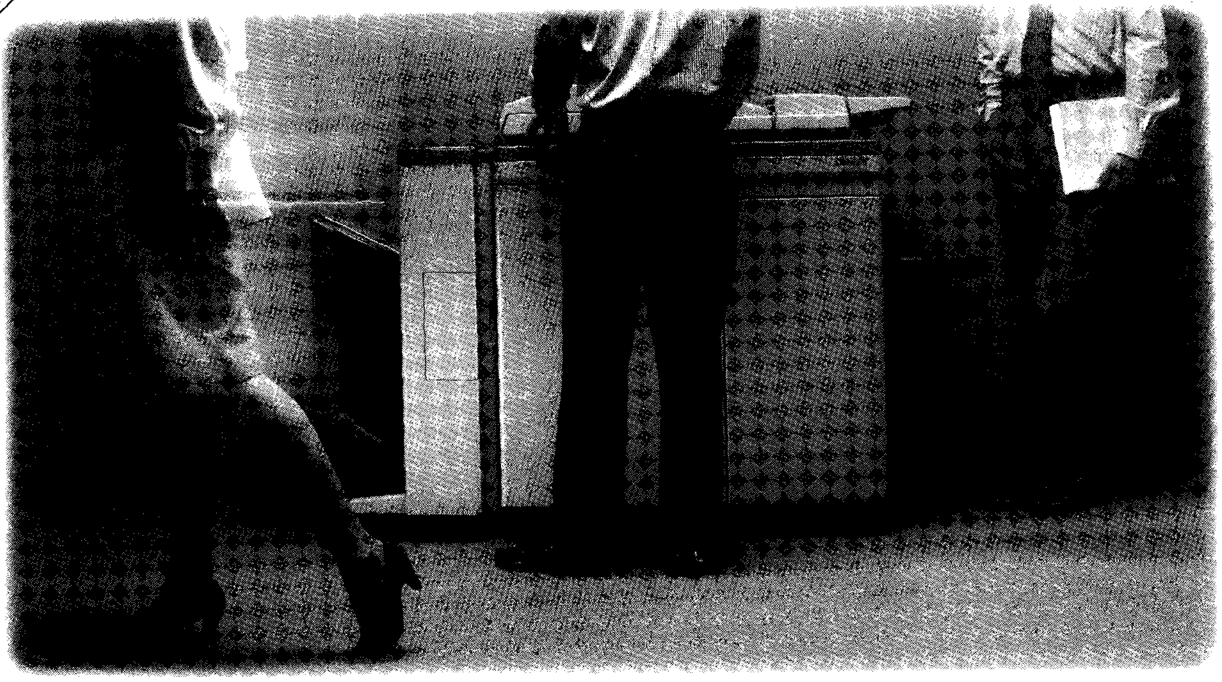
Dietz wrote his senior honors thesis at Cornell on the sociology of deviance. Enrolled in a psychology honors program in addition to his pre-med studies, he seemed well started along the road to traditional psychiatry, but already he realized that mental illness interested him far less than the study of "sexual deviations and delinquent behavior." He felt dangerously tempted to apply to Berkeley, despite its radical faculty, in order to study criminology. Then, one day in the Cornell bookstore, he opened a book he had plucked at random from the shelves and had what amounted to an epiphany. "Here's this photograph of a boy wearing what looks like a slip or a bra or both, asphyxiated, dead, and pornography all over the ground." The caption under the photograph, which showed a young male who had evidently hanged himself from a tree, read, "Accidental Death During Masochistic Exercise."

"It was a 'Holy shit!' experience," he told me. "I don't know a nicer way to put it."

That book—"Forensic Medicine," by Keith Simpson, of Guys Hospital, in London—was a primer for a field Dietz had never considered entering: it dealt with the laboratory findings of forensic pathologists and toxicologists. The realization that the empirically knowable aspects of gunshot and knife wounds, asphyxiations, and poisonings could be sources of insight into the psychology of violent behavior impressed him more than anything he had heard in psychology lectures. "I remember asking my teachers how they could account for behavior like that. All the theorizing could not account for it, and still can't!" he told me, with a triumphant ring in his voice.

What he also found when he opened Simpson's book was an unexpected means of deliverance from a painful personal dilemma: forensic medicine offered him a way to become a doctor, as his father wished, while pursuing his true calling, "which was to study and spend my time on the strangest of crimes." When Dietz entered Johns Hopkins Medical School, he looked at everything he had to study there with a view to how it could be used to solve crimes. He spent his spare hours in the autopsy labs of the Baltimore medical examiner's office, and stayed an extra year at Hopkins to get a master's degree in public health.

He told his classmate Daryl Matthews that he was going to create the discipline of medical criminology. And that, Matthews says, is essentially what he has done: "Park Dietz took some-



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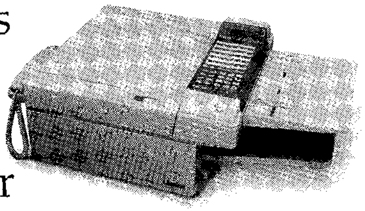


"O.K., just one more item. Who gets the frequent-flier miles?"

• •

thing that was of interest to him, and found that there was an enormous intellectual vacuum there and that he could creatively combine some things that hadn't been combined before." Pathology has remained the cornerstone of Dietz's approach to forensic psychiatry. He has proved intent in asphyxiation cases by knowing the exact amount of pressure it takes to strangle someone. Because he was aware that the type of gun Betty Broderick used to shoot her ex-husband and his second wife had a high probability of inaccuracy, he was able to persuade a San Diego jury that Broderick had taken careful aim at her victims. Unlike many of his colleagues, he is much less interested in a defendant's history than in the physical evidence surrounding the criminal act.

The forerunners of today's forensic psychiatrists were the alienists, who began testifying in trials in the eighteen-fifties. But even as late as 1967, when Dr. Jonas Rappeport, one of the fathers of forensic psychiatry, succeeded Manfred Guttmacher as chief medical officer at the Circuit Court for the City of Baltimore, doctors were working in an "imprecise, very autocratic, dogmatic way," I was told by Dr. Rappeport himself, who was one of Dietz's teachers at Johns Hopkins. "Testimony would be 'Well, I say so—that's why it's so.' " In fact, psychiatry continued to be much more of a "verbal sort of profession than the rest of medicine, relying on generalized statements," he said. Jonas Rappeport credits Park Dietz with modernizing forensic psychiatry by setting standards that have made it increasingly precise and scientific. He recalls that when he discovered Dietz at Hopkins his feeling was one of "love at first sight," for "Park consumed books, consumed information." Dietz's professional ascent was rapid. In 1978, at the age of twenty-nine, he was appointed director of forensic psychiatry at the Bridgewater State Hospital for the Criminally Insane, in Massachusetts. Positions at Harvard and then at the University of Virginia followed.

THE case that first brought Park Dietz into the public eye came in 1981, and it is still the most important one of his career. Ironically, it also turned into a rare defeat. He was only thirty-two when the Department of Justice appointed him to head the most extensive forensic-psychiatric investigation that had ever been mounted: the offender in question was John Hinckley, Jr., who had attempted to assassinate President Ronald Reagan. Dietz moved to Washington and turned himself into a detective, not only conducting psychiatric interviews with Hinckley but combing through Hinckley's books, papers, and luggage for clues to his state of mind. It was Dietz who discovered that Hinckley had attempted the assassination in the hope of impressing the actress Jodie Foster, whom he had been stalking, and whom he planned to abduct by holding the passengers of an airliner hostage until she was brought to him. But, despite all the evidence that Dietz amassed on the stand to show the would-be assassin's degree of calculation and awareness of wrongdoing, the Washington jury decided to disregard his arguments and found John Hinckley insane.

Dr. Dietz's appearances as an expert since then have more typically been marked by success. A homicide trial in Cambridge, Massachusetts, was my first opportunity to see him in action, on the morning of January 28, 1993. The pallid-looking defendant, Kenneth Seguin, had killed his wife and two children, and now sat numbly, chewing gum throughout the proceedings. The spectators found it significant that the prosecution had brought Dietz in from California when there were, after all, so many psychiatrists in Cambridge.

Kenneth Seguin, in the post-trial words of his attorney, J. W. Carney, Jr., "was probably the most giving, selfless individual that Dr. Dietz had ever encountered in his life." It was Carney's contention that the actions of the defendant, thirty-seven years old and a devout Catholic, resulted from the psychotic delusion that his wife and two children, whom he dearly loved, were in danger, and "the only thing he could do was kill them himself, so that they could be safe in Heaven." Before Dr. Dietz took the stand, three defense experts had testified that Kenneth Seguin was suffering from a major depression leading to psychosis.

Carney had made it his business to learn a great deal about Park Dietz, phoning all over the country for advice from defense attorneys. They warned him about Dietz's smooth presentation and remarkable power of recall; once Dietz got rolling, he could be mesmerizing. By January 28th, Carney had come up with an unusual strategy. Generally, an attorney tries to suggest to the jury that the credentials of an expert witness are inadequate. Carney decided to take a different tack: Dr. Dietz's formidable credentials, he would imply, were all too numerous and too varied.

After Dr. Dietz played into his hands by taking more than ten minutes to tell the jury about his education, posts, and accomplishments, Carney launched his offensive by citing an article that Dr. Dietz had written: "You say it is doubtful a forensic psychiatrist could be proficient in many specialized areas, that he would risk mediocrity or incompetence. You told us that your focus has moved away from your teaching. As part of your business, *if you will*"—each word had a sting in it—"you are a partner in the Threat Assessment Group providing advice to the Fortune 500."

Carney pressed on. "You worked for Cher, Olivia Newton-John, Michael Jackson. In addition, you've told us you're also a consultant to the F.B.I. and the New York State Police, another prominent law-enforcement group. Your résumé at last count is thirty-four pages long!"

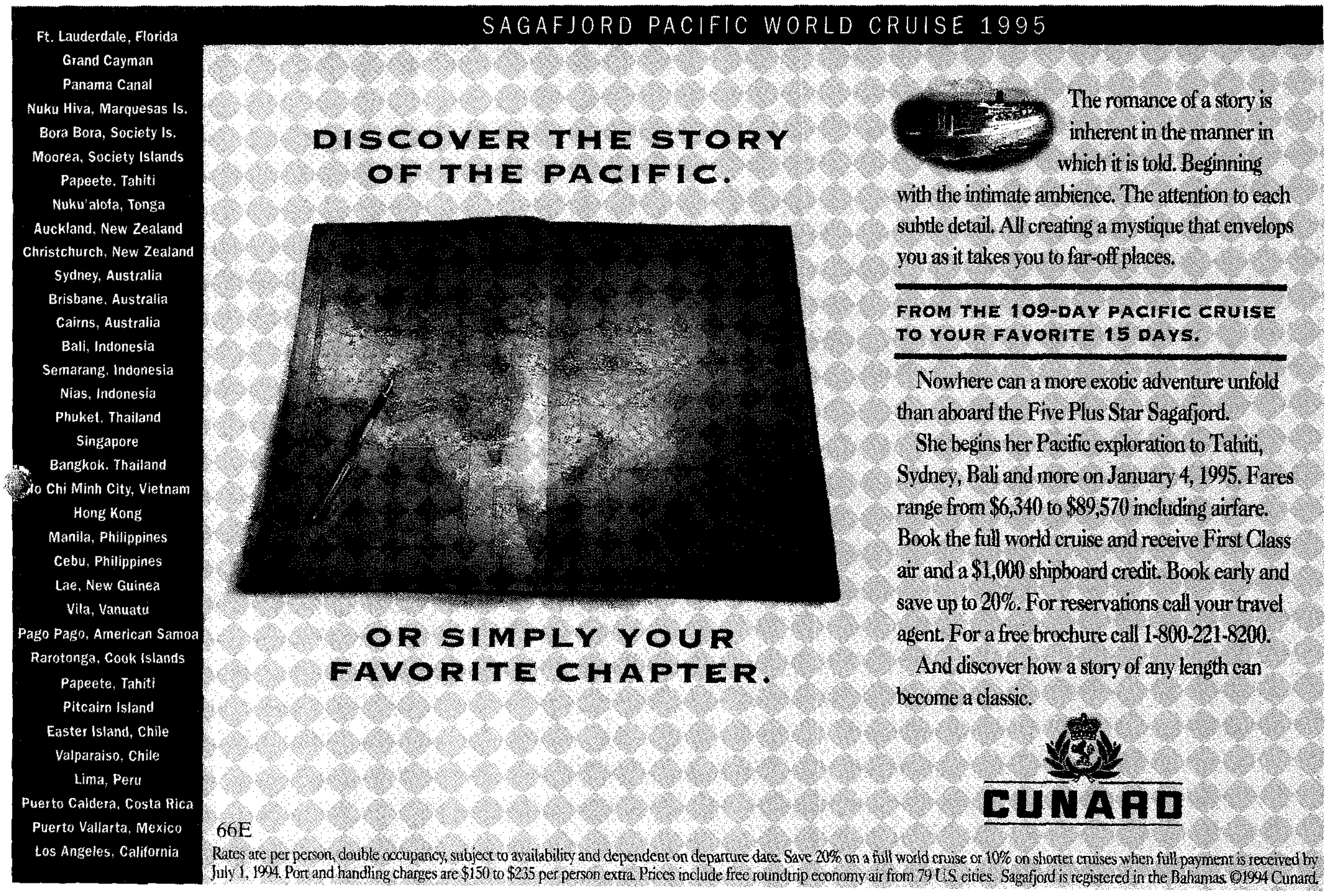
"That's right," Dr. Dietz answered.

"Single-spaced, isn't it, Doctor?" Brandishing the offending résumé, Carney started reading off titles of articles that Dr. Dietz had published: "Pornography and Obscenity Sold in 'Adult Bookstores,' " "Threatening and Inappropriate Letters to Hollywood Celebrities," "The Criminal Sexual Sadist," "Product Tampering," "Mentally Disordered Offenders Who Push or Attempt to Push Victims Onto Subway Tracks." After a pause, Carney read the next one very slowly: "Autoerotic Fatalities with Power Hydraulics."

There was audible laughter; even the judge grinned. Dr. Dietz calmly explained that the article was about men who hang themselves from tractors while masturbating and wearing women's clothing. "You're an expert on this?" Carney asked.

Shortly afterward, when the judge called a recess, I rode down to the cafeteria in an elevator with Carney and a number of reporters. One of them said encouragingly to Carney, "You made him blink."

Gazing steadily into the faces of the jurors when he returned to the stand, Dr. Dietz began to tell a story that would have seemed rather innocuous if its likable, hardworking, mild-mannered protagonist had not within the space of one night slaughtered thirty-four-year-old Polly Seguin, seven-year-old Danny, and five-year-old Amy. Much of the time, Dietz sounded as compassionate and well disposed toward the defendant as if he had been brought in by Carney. With none of the psychiatric terminol-



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ogy that jurors find so intimidating, he spoke of Seguin's insecurity about his performance in his new job, at Banyan Systems, a computer company; his humiliation over being unable to provide his wife with the "dream house" she had set her heart on; the exhaustion and depression that had caused him to seek psychiatric treatment.

Dr. Dietz, still sounding compassionate, began to build a wall of damning fact, brick by brick, in concert with the prosecuting attorney, David E. Meier. As the events of April 28, 1992, were replayed in slow motion, the jury was shown with unwavering clarity how none of Seguin's actions, from the time he removed a razor from his desk at work, suggested impulsive, spontaneous, ungoverned behavior. If it remained hard to make sense of the over-all reasons for what Seguin had done, each step along the way condemned him. The razor was transferred to a pocket of Seguin's jeans before he drove his family to a soccer game at Stoddard Park, where he seemed to have no difficulty functioning as coach. Later that evening, following dinner, Seguin waited until Polly had left the house to visit a friend—suggesting an appreciation of wrongfulness, Dr. Dietz pointed out to the jury—before putting Danny and Amy in his pickup truck, with a pillow for each child. The fact that Seguin called his empty house from the road and left a message for Polly on the answering machine, saying that the children were with him, could also be chalked up against the insanity plea.

Dr. Dietz then told how Seguin, after drugging his children and driving them to a secluded state park, carried his sleeping daughter from his car to the edge of a pond. Just before he cut the little girl's wrists and both sides of her neck with the razor, Amy had awakened and drowsily asked him, "Why are we here?" The cuts on her neck were superficial, suggesting, Dr. Dietz testified, that the act had been aversive.

And so Dr. Dietz's testimony proceeded, highlighting the glints of calculation and self-awareness in the midst of seeming madness. "He was suicidal already, because of his own depression," Dr. Dietz explained to me afterward. "But, being so dedicated to his family that the importance of family unity was greater to him than the Catholic Church's prohibition against suicide, he selfishly decided to take his family with him, believing there was an afterlife."

For the jury, Dr. Dietz wrapped up the case in the statement "It was the one selfish act of a selfless man."

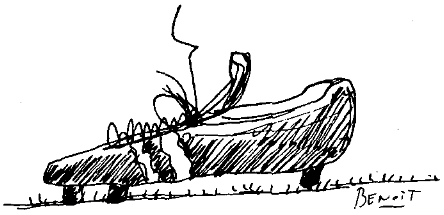
A week later, after thirty-one hours of sequestered deliberation, the jury rejected Kenneth Seguin's insanity defense and found him guilty of three counts of second-degree murder.

When I spoke with Seguin's attorney three months later, that defeat still rankled. "Why did the government have to go three thousand miles from the courthouse? I think it was because they knew two things. No. 1, that Dr. Dietz is a very good witness. And, No. 2, that he would support the government's position." Carney scoffs at the notion of Dr. Dietz as an unbiased expert. "Dr. Dietz sees things through the eyes of the prosecutor, through the eyes of the New York State Police, the F.B.I.," he said. Later in our conversation, he observed, "Dr. Dietz is a wonderful actor, a wonderful expert witness. Just as an actor can convince you by his role-playing that he is a psychiatrist, so can Dr. Dietz. But no one would ever contend that an actor truly has a psychiatric opinion that is valid."

Assistant District Attorney David Meier told me that Dietz, before he interviewed Seguin, had warned that he might well end up forming an opinion which would prevent him from testifying against Seguin. Meier was struck by Dietz's sense of fairness: "That was the most important thing he said to me."

It is a point of pride with Dr. Dietz that he calls every case exactly as he sees it. But, in his view, when criminal charges are heavy, truth is rarely to be found on the side of a defense attorney's client. Dietz's predilection for the prosecution's side does not seem unconnected to his conservative politics or to his profound alienation from the physician's role in traditional psychiatry.

"Park never treats anybody and has no qualms about it," Dr. Rappeport pointed out to me. "The concern is, though, does this make him a psychiatrist or a sort of a scientist in the field of psychiatry? And does this make him better—best, in a way—for what he's doing, but not good for understanding some of the psychological nuances of human behavior? I think he understands human behavior and human dynamics. And he can utilize this knowledge, I believe. On the other hand, I have a suspicion he may not like to do that. So he may find himself more frequently on the side of the prosecutor, who doesn't like to do those things either. He's very rigid, you know, in that 'If it's not a fact, if it's not provable, I don't even want to consider it.' If there is a fault, I think that's the fault, because human life isn't quite that way. Physicians aren't scientists. Fifty per cent or more of medicine is emotional." Having said that, Dr. Rappeport reflected that forensic psychiatry had enough people "who are willing to wax poetic."



Sometimes Dr. Dietz plays with the idea of eliminating the insanity defense. What would happen if the criminal-justice system were cut loose from the notion of free will, or from that legal construct of the "guilty mind"? Criminal justice would be largely shorn of its punitive aspect. The primary function of incarceration would be incapacitation, and certain kinds of criminals, such as violent child molesters, could be put into preventive detention for life. ("Currently," Dietz pointed out dryly, "that's unconstitutional.") There would, of course, no longer be a role for the insanity defense. A "sanity defense" might replace it. There was a provocative gleam in his eye as he expatiated upon these unthinkable notions: People who could prove they chose to do evil of their own free will might be "publicly flogged and otherwise given retribution and not preventively detained." As for the permanent detainees, who couldn't help doing what they did, "what one would like is a kind of Holiday Inn setting where they'd spend the rest of their lives fed reasonably and cheaply, with access to comforts of various kinds."

Dr. Dietz would have us pay far more heed to what he believes conditions us to act as we do. His crusade against American popular culture, as he made clear in one of our conversations

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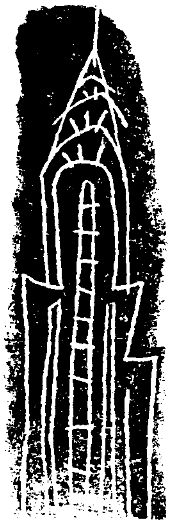
in Newport Beach, extends beyond pornography into the realms of detective magazines, slasher films, TV crime shows, publications such as *Soldier of Fortune*, and the sensationalistic reportage that he blames for adding fuel to the L.A. riots and creating such crime fads as carjacking and product tampering, not to mention the stalkers he protects his celebrity clients from. "You say I'm preoccupied, and I don't deny it, but there's a reason for it," he told me. "When I get to the bottom of each problem I look at, I keep finding television, Hollywood, the media, an unregulated industry standing behind the First Amendment, and gaining power despite their harmfulness, because they—unlike everyone else—needn't be accountable or compensate their victims."



At one point, Dr. Dietz shouted, "Physicians! Psychiatrists! They're so removed, they don't understand what's really affecting people. They're worrying about things that happened twenty years ago and asking people about the impact on their families and they just don't get it—how the culture is dramatically changing." Although he admits that the tort system has its problems, he sometimes says he would like to see the entire Fourth Estate, as well as the pornography industry, set right "by making them pay for the harm that they do."

Dr. Dietz claims to practice self-censorship, but, having taken the high road, he apparently feels somewhat cheated. "You need to understand that I'm someone who could have had fifteen books published and made millions from them if I had even a dose of the pathology that leads every producer behind the tabloid shows and the talk shows to do what they do every day of their lives," he said. "Sluts" he called the producers from the networks who keep pestering him for guest appearances.

Still, the entertainment industry is also a magnet for Dr. Dietz. He has served as a consultant for several Hollywood thrillers and for the TV series "Law and Order." What he enjoys most about doing that is what he also enjoys most about being an expert witness—"having a chance to shape how it all comes out." So far, he says, the producers have taken his advice about avoiding the graphic depictions of violence that promote copycat crimes.

WHEN Dr. Dietz painstakingly unravels a killing, comes to know what the perpetrator knows, even handles the actual weapon, he gets as close to the real, dark thing as one can after the fact. Yet some unsatisfied need for heightened experience may lead him into what he calls his "adventures"—opportunities to narrow the gap between investigator and subject by putting himself directly in harm's way.

The fall of 1987, for example, found Dr. Dietz in the middle of the Nevada desert with a group of *Soldier of Fortune* aficionados, who were decked out in camouflage suits and armed to the teeth. Similarly outfitted, Dr. Dietz, wearing his nametag for all to see, collected data and eavesdropped on conversations about "who the fuck these sons of bitches are that are going to sue the magazine." At the time, Dr. Dietz was assisting in a multimillion-dollar lawsuit filed against *Soldier of Fortune;* the complainant was the grown child of a woman killed by a hit man whom her husband had hired. The hit man had advertised in the classified section that he was seeking "high risk assignments." Dr. Dietz had checked into the Sahara Hotel during a convention of hundreds of the publication's subscribers in order to gather material for his deposition. "That didn't feel like the most secure moment of my career," he remarked, with a chuckle.

Dr. Dietz had been tracking *Soldier of Fortune* on his own initiative since 1979, when he was shown a few issues during the first of many visits to the F.B.I. Academy. "I set up a mail drop in another city, under the pseudonym Hawkeye Enterprises," he told me, "and developed correspondence with all these people selling strange weapons and wanting to do strange things."

Dr. Dietz rose from his desk chair and unlocked his glass case to remove a knife disguised as a ballpoint pen. "You develop strange tastes when you spend enough time with all this weirdness. There's a story behind every one of these knives," he said with a touch of collector's pride. "And here's last year's innovation—the Cold Steel Tanto. The ads show it penetrating the door of a car. It's made of synthetic materials, and they recommend strapping it to your leg when you go through the metal detector at the airport. I bought a dozen of them and sent them out to airline-security chiefs and homicide investigators as a Christmas present."

The memory of the trouble he had gone to ignited his anger. "I feel like a one-man investigative agency sometimes," he told me. "This isn't forensic psychiatry. This is 'Hey, guys, we've got a violence problem in our society.' I'm *everywhere* out there learning about it. And I want to try to get the information to the people who need to know it." Suddenly sounding weary, he added, "It all begins to run together."

Turning his thoughts to more upbeat matters, he held up a copy of *American Handgunner* and told me he'd bought the very weapon depicted on the cover. Out of nowhere he produced a small gray handgun. "It's famous. Everybody who's into combat handguns knows about this design now, and I have the prototype. I may, if it's reliable enough, carry that instead of another I usually carry."

"Do you carry a gun around with you?" I asked.

"I am licensed to carry a gun in California. There's no such thing as a federal permit to carry a concealed weapon" was his answer.

ON my last day in Newport Beach, I get a chance to watch Dr. Dietz display his marksmanship. Around noon, Mrs. Dietz picks me up at my hotel, and we drive south toward Irvine. The sprinklered lawns give way to sand, scrub, and sagebrush as we climb into the hills. The terrain is instantly familiar to me, having been imprinted on my mind by countless Hollywood Westerns. We pull up alongside a long wooden shed that looks like an outbuilding on a ranch, but there are no horses and cowboys here: just a lot of

BMWs and Mercedeses and a bunch of fortyish males—pleasant, well-to-do Californians with guns. They're doctors, lawyers, real-estate agents, according to Mrs. Dietz. I've missed the Santa Ana SWAT team, who visited last week. Volleys of gunfire can be heard coming from several directions, as if a number of pitched battles were going on.

Dr. Dietz has been out here since early morning. He lopes toward me in raggedy cutoffs and a faded navy-blue F.B.I. T-shirt, his eyes shaded by an Australian bush hat. "You can get hearing loss in one day," he warns me sternly, handing me a set of enormous ear protectors, and some plastic goggles to protect my eyes from rock fragments.

The dress code here, Dr. Dietz explains, discourages those who wear camouflage outfits from participating. To distance this sport even further from any disreputable *Soldier of Fortune* associations, its name has been changed from "combat shooting" to "practical shooting."

All the shooting setups have different titles. Last week, for example, one was called "Shootout at the Convenience Store." The setup to which Dr. Dietz has led me is inexplicably named "Call Waiting." For the next hour, I watch bullets rip through dummies set up as targets and bury themselves in the sagebrush.

The more numerous dummies are brown—they are the bad guys. It just so happens that the good guys, or hostages, are white. The presentation—faceless heads and torsos on sticks—couldn't be more abstract. Nor could the demeanor of the shooters be more sedate as they line up and wait their turns. Each one eventually steps forward and, running in a slightly crouched position, the gun clutched in front of him in both outstretched hands, attempts to put two bullets in each brown dummy in the shortest time, hoping to hit the head, known here as the A zone. Careful measurements are taken after each shooter is finished; then pieces of masking tape are placed over the holes. Some shooters keep bits of tape stuck all over their shirts to expedite this process.

When it's Dr. Dietz's turn, a willowy blonde calls out "Ready!" and runs along behind him with a stopwatch. The highest possible score is 130; Dr. Dietz racks up 128 and feels quite satisfied. He tells me his philosophy: "Incapacitate every target, even if it takes longer. That's what you'd want to do in real life."

Dr. Dietz shows me the gun he has been using today—its trade name is Witness. "Czech design," he informs me. For months, it gave him trouble because his thumb was rubbing against the side, but an adjustment was made and now there's no problem. "When I'm focussed, I don't know what the hell is going on," he says happily.

It's late afternoon by the time the last points are tallied up. One by one, the shooters peel the tape off their shirts and leave. Dr. Dietz seems reluctant to tear himself away. For fifteen minutes, he stands waiting in front of the bulletin board where the final scores will be posted. Sure enough, he's today's winner. He hurries off to claim his plaque. ♦

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LETTER FROM MEXICO

ZAPATA'S HEIRS

A trip behind rebel lines and an interview with the mysterious military leader of the Maya reveals why the crisis erupted—and continues—in Chiapas.

BY ALMA GUILLERMOPRIETO

SAN CRISTÓBAL DE LAS CASAS

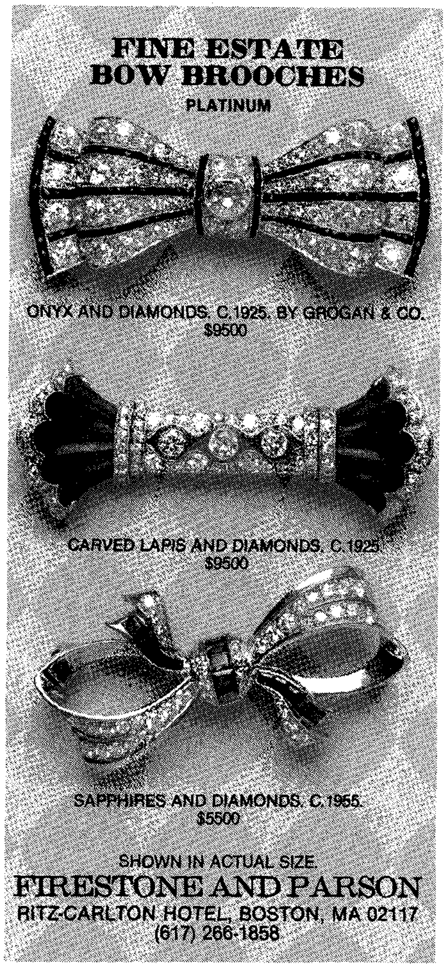
WHAT all of Mexico understood when it awoke last New Year's Day to discover a ragged congregation of peasants calling themselves the Zapatista National Liberation Army, or E.Z.L.N., marching through the streets and proclaiming the overthrow of the regime was that the Mexican Revolution had finally arrived in the state of Chiapas. Things take a long time to get here. The revolution did not arrive in 1911, when Emiliano Zapata and his campesino battalions, in the state of Morelos, northwest of here, rose up to the cry of *"Tierra y Libertad!"* It was defeated by the Chiapas gentry when the troops of Venustiano Carranza, a liberal landholder, arrived in 1914 and tried to impose decrees abolishing indentured labor and *latifundios*—extra-large haciendas.

The revolution did not even really get here in 1940, when President Lázaro Cárdenas made a legendary trip to San Cristóbal, the first ever by any Mexican ruler—involving several days' travel by car, steamboat, train, and, finally, horseback—all to enforce his land-reform program in this renegade region. A highway to San Cristóbal was inaugurated in 1946, some *latifundios* were reduced in size, and the state's political chieftains perfected a system that every six years, at election time, allowed them to deliver a hundred per cent of the votes to Cárdenas's party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI. Nevertheless, Chiapas and the center of its counter-revolutionary power, San Cristóbal, remained largely beyond the reach of modern comforts and of the hegemonizing ambitions of the regime that declared itself the guardian of the ideals of Carranza, Cárdenas, and Zapata.

To make up for lost time, the new revolution has proceeded to turn not only Chiapas but the whole country upside down. At this stage, Mexico feels as if it were precariously balanced on the head of a pin. Luis Donaldo Colosio, whom President Carlos Salinas de Gortari appointed to succeed him in August, has been assassinated. The stock market is teetering. One of the wealthiest men in Mexico, kidnapped two months ago, is still pleading for someone to pay his ransom so he won't be killed. Another multimillionaire was kidnapped late last month. The private sector has been taking its money out of the stock market and putting it into dollars at a rate that threatens the stability of the peso. The PRI is badly split. It is unlikely but conceivable that another party could win the elections, for the first time in sixty-five years—an idea that would have seemed ridiculous right up to December 31st, given Salinas's ratings in the polls then. All these crises are linked in indefinable ways to the arrival of the new Zapatistas on the national scene, but each has taken on a momentum of its own.

In the meantime, the Chiapas crisis itself continues, even though Salinas—a man of remarkable political flexibility—took some of the wind out of the Zapatistas' sails by appointing a peace commissioner and calling for a ceasefire just twelve days after the New Year's Day takeover of San Cristóbal. Today, the President looks a great deal less powerful than he did six months ago, and this change of aspect, in turn, affects his ability to assure the Zapatistas that his successor, to be elected next August 21st, will be able to enforce any peace treaty that might be negotiated.

Colosio's murder, on March 23rd, looked to many people like the work of the right wing of the Institutional Revolutionary Party—which is furious about, among other things, the President's soft treatment of the Zapatistas. After the assassination, the Zapatista National



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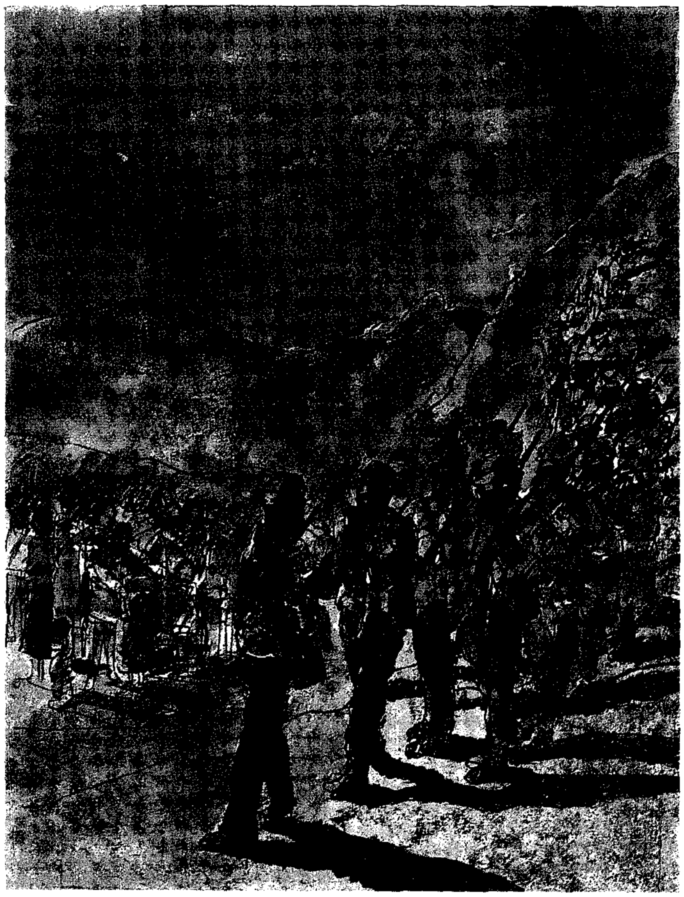
Liberation Army reportedly feared that a major military offensive—or even a coup d'état—was on the way. It then called a halt to internal consultations it had carried on regarding a tentative agreement that had been reached during talks in February between its representatives and the government's peace commissioner. In effect, this means that the dialogue for peace, as the ongoing talks are called, is suspended indefinitely. A brief meeting between the two sides this week led only to a promise of further meetings. The ceasefire that was declared when the peace talks were announced is holding, but it is constantly threatened by the ferment that was generated in the Chiapas countryside on January 1st. Land-hungry peasants have invaded nearly a hundred thousand acres of agricultural land in the state, while the cattle ranchers whose land is threatened mutter about their willingness to take up arms themselves. These ranchers are the political descendants of the original *mapaches*—the counter-revolutionary guerrillas of the time of Carranza—and, given their very recent use of murder and intimidation against the peasantry, their anger is not to be taken lightly. So far, the military, which mobilized some twelve thousand troops in the state after the uprising, has shown a remarkable degree of discipline, but everyone is wondering how quickly the conflict could escalate if there were a ceasefire violation.

Meanwhile, the revolution that was once broadcast live is disappearing from the media. Gone are the images of ski-masked combatants, which reminded the nation of a past whose legacy has been turned into rhetoric and honored in the breach. Gone are the equally mesmerizing images of the interior of the San Cristóbal Cathedral, where these same Indian combatants sat down to talk as equals with a government that, a month into this unlikely war, was hemorrhaging politically, although it had suffered few military blows. (The Zapatistas' only military near-success was an assault on a garrison outside San Cristóbal. Elsewhere, they did very poorly—a disappointment that might explain *their* willingness to sit down at the negotiating table.) The Zapatistas have pulled back to their stronghold, the Lacandón jungle region of Chiapas, near the border of Guatemala, and the deforested, mountainous area there known as Las Cañadas—the canyons. That is where one must go to look for answers to the many questions no one had time to ask in the dizzy excitement of the first few weeks. Why did several thousand campesinos decide to go to war? What did they set out to achieve on January 1st, and how willing are they to deviate from that original plan? What is the relation between the Zapatistas' Indian leadership—something called the Clandestine Revolutionary Indian Committee—and a green-eyed, light-skinned man known as Marcos, who gives all the press interviews? What does the Indian leadership want, and how does that differ from what Marcos will settle for? Or should the question be asked the other way around?



Subcomandante Marcos: "The war isn't over. We will take Mexico City, although not necessarily in physical terms."

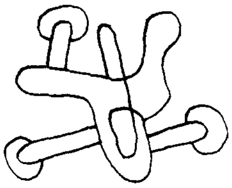
ROBERT ANDREW PARKER

FITTINGLY for Chiapas, it takes a long time to travel from San Cristóbal to the villages under Zapatista control—an area that begins about seventy miles southeast of here. From this town, which now makes its living largely off tourists who are attracted to its tile-roof-and-cobblestone charm, one descends through misty pine forests to the lowland town of Ocosingo, a pitiful splotch of one-story houses on treeless, sunbaked streets, and then to a village that marks the border of the Zapatistas' territory. Access past this point is strictly controlled, but on a recent weekend the Zapatista Liberation Army invited journalists to drive in, having announced that after this visit there would be no further press expeditions in the foreseeable future. After a couple of days' wait at the border village, and stops at a succession of Zapatista checkpoints, we entered a land of hamlets without electricity or health clinics, without passable dirt roads, or even a place to buy anything to eat or drink.

Fifty years ago, this area was mostly highland jungle, but after President Cárdenas came to Chiapas to promote land reform many *latifundistas* were forced to free their indentured Mayan peasants. Many other *latifundistas* voluntarily expelled their peons, because raising cattle for export to the United States was becoming a big business, and ranching required far less labor than running the traditional, self-sufficient haciendas with diversified crops. The government encouraged the freed peons—Maya belonging mostly to the Tzeltal language group, but also migrant speakers of Tojolabal, Tzotzil, and Chol—to colonize what was then seen as a promising agricultural frontier. That was the former jungle we were now entering, and the first thing we learned here was that the new Zapatistas were not the most backward, or even the poorest, campesinos of Chiapas—Maya tied to their exhausted small farms in the highlands by tradition and passivity—but, rather, the innovators: adventurous frontiersmen and women who were convinced that they could make a new world. The original Zapatistas had asked for "land and liberty," but the new rebels' demands are more complicated and more ambitious, because they already have land, and, in that they are the victims of almost total government neglect, they also have liberty.

A man who called himself Vicente told us at a Zapatista village we visited that what he really wanted was a good education. He pointed toward the schoolhouse nearby; it was closed now because of the war, but even before that it had offered studies only up to the second grade, and the teachers, underpaid and underqualified, rarely stayed around for a full school year.

The village was perched at the gateway to the Las Cañadas area, on a promontory surrounded by high peaks. A parched river diminished into a trickle, where women stooped to wash clothes. The steep hills all around were covered with a patchwork of *milpas*—corn plantings—and the remaining forest. The village itself was much like the others in this corner of the state: a stuccoed adobe church, the schoolhouse, a dusty playground, a scattering of mud-and-wattle shacks. A dozen visitors had lined up against the church wall like prisoners, in an attempt to hide from the scorching sun, and eventually we moved into a shed set up as an open-air communal kitchen, where a few noncombatants were getting ready to cook a vat of beans for the Zapatista troops stationed in the village. One of the men there was Vicente, who was reading from San Cristóbal's only newspaper—a three-sheet linotyped daily called *El Tiempo*, which someone had just brought in. He was reading aloud and very slowly, working out the words one by one, for the benefit of his *compañeros*.



Vicente told me he would have liked to finish the sixth grade, or possibly even high school, but the nearest full-grade school was in Ocosingo, and so his children's chances of completing primary school were also pretty slim. His interest in education was all the more striking because the list of his other wants was so basic and urgent. His actual cash income was virtually nonexistent. What there was went immediately for salt, soap, and the like, and toward medicines that the villagers kept stocked for emergencies. His plot of land on the *ejido*, or communal farm—the village was its center—was a two-hour walk away, and was so steep and dry that it was barely possible to raise on it a subsistence crop of corn and beans. Some fifty years ago, following Cárdenas's trip to Chiapas, Vicente's grandparents had been freed from serfdom and granted the right to set up an *ejido* here, on what was the edge of the Lacandón jungle. But the fertile land at the bottom of the valley somehow wound up in the hands of *los ricos*, in amounts far beyond what the law allowed. And, now that there were so many new mouths to feed, the original *ejido* was not nearly large enough or productive enough to take care of everyone.

The Zapatista battle cry of "*Tierra y Libertad!*," formulated at a time when fewer than eight hundred and fifty families held ninety-seven per cent of Mexico's arable land, was the basis of Article 27 of the Constitution. Until late 1992, this article not only regulated the maximum size for private ranches and farms but also guaranteed all peasants who were banded together in *ejidos* the inalienable right to their land, and the right to claim *latifundio* and fallow land from the government. For ten years, the men in Vicente's village, under the auspices of Church-inspired peasant organizations, had pressed their demand for an expansion of their *ejido* at the offices of the Agrarian Reform Ministry in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, the state capital, and then in Mexico City. "But they always lied to us," Vicente said. "They would tell us to go home and get a certificate of this or that and then come back on such-and-such a date. So we would go back on the appointed date, and they would say, 'Oh, no, El Señor isn't here, he had to leave, come back another day.' And we would come home again, thinking, Well, it couldn't be, and now we've spent our *compañeros'* money on the trip. And then the government changed Article 27, and now we can't file a claim on that land anymore, and we'll never be able to take out a loan, because the interest rates are very high, and if we don't pay our debts on time the bank can take the land we have away from us. The end of Article 27 was what made us decide we'd had enough."

The radicalization of Vicente's village did not happen overnight, though. In 1970, Samuel Ruiz, the Bishop of San Cristóbal, decided to follow the long-neglected example of the sixteenth-century Dominican friar Bartolomé de las Casas by preaching a radical gospel in favor of the Indians. Like the Tzeltal pioneers, the Bishop saw the Lacandón jungle as the promised land. He commissioned a translation of the Book of Exodus into Tzeltal, and, because there were very few priests who could minister to the region, he set up a network of lay preachers—deacons—to serve the scattered pioneer communities of Las Cañadas. Bishop Ruiz's vision of a radical peasant utopia in the jungle coincided with the arrival of a group of Maoist political activists. They were disillusioned with the whole idea of armed struggle, and preferred to spend the next decade—roughly, from 1974 to 1984—organizing the Indian communities to fight the government on its own terms: by winning bureaucratic battles and pressing for credits and subsidies as well as land. It was slow work, with few victories, and gradually, as the number of settlers multiplied and came to occupy virtually all the arable land, the communities of Las Cañadas grew impatient. The Maoist-bred leadership in their own ranks was becoming too close to the government, they felt, and was negotiating behind their backs and selling them out. The *caxlan*—white—advisers were made to feel unwelcome, and pulled out. Then, in 1983, a new group of political activists—six of them, they themselves say—arrived with a project of their own. They wanted a new armed revolution in Mexico, and they thought that the utopian communities of Chiapas were the perfect place to begin.

They didn't start proselytizing right away, they say. They lived in almost intolerable conditions in caves in the rainforest mountains along the border with Guatemala, made contact with a few trusted families in Las Cañadas and beyond, and offered emergency medical services to whoever might need them. But they let it be known that they were there to offer their armed expertise whenever the communities should decide that that was what they wanted. In the first few years, they made almost no headway; their numbers expanded from six to forty, and that was considered a triumph. Then, in the early eighties, as the jungle lands ran out, the campesinos began invading the cattle ranchers' land, and the ranchers, true to their old tradition, reactivated their *guardias blancas*, or terror patrols. Peasant leaders were killed, and entire villages were burned down or threatened. In 1989, the International Coffee Organization allowed the price of coffee to float on the international market. Prices collapsed, to the detriment not of the coffee exporters but of the seventy-four thousand peasants in Chiapas who produce a third of Mexico's coffee exports. Among those who were ruined were the more prosperous campesinos in Las Cañadas. Around this time, the Indian leaders in the area consulted among themselves and agreed that it was time to call the people in the caves. According to someone who spent many years working as an organizer with the reformist Maoist movement, and who, along with the rest of the Maoists, left the region in 1989, by that date there was virtually not a youth in Las Cañadas who had not gone up to the mountain caves to receive military training. Now the only question was what would be the right moment to act. When the reform of Article 27 was announced, the Clandestine Revolutionary Indian Committee of what was already the Zapatista National Liberation Army held a secret referendum in the region. The vote was by no means universally in favor of taking up arms—a good many campesinos had defected back to the Maoist-reformist organization and had recalled their *caxlan* advisers—but at the end of the referendum period the followers of the Zapatistas among the people of Las Cañadas told the military mestizo leadership that they were ready to prepare for war.

THE Clandestine Revolutionary Indian Committee held a press conference at Vicente's village for the visiting journalists. The committee members strolled up to a breezy lean-to overlooking the valley early in the afternoon—eighteen of them, all male, all wearing ski masks or gaily printed bandannas over nose and mouth. I had the feeling that I had seen some of these men just a short time before, chatting on a bench with the other villagers. The one whose Spanish seemed to be most fluent was called Rubén, and he was rotund, cheerful, and outspoken. One of the committee's members had been murdered two days before, and it would have been easy for Rubén to say that the killing had been the work of the cattle ranchers, but he said instead that it might have been the result of an act of *indisciplina* by the committee member, that an investigation was under way, and that the *consulta* on the peace talks' tentative areas of agreement would have to be suspended at least until the murder was cleared up. In any case, he said, the *consulta* would take many months, because the proposal would have to be translated into all the Mayan languages in the region and discussed to everyone's satisfaction, so that the agreement eventually reached could be a lasting one. "We've been at this for years," he said. "Why rush for the sake of a few months?" What the committee wanted, however it was formulated, he went on, was an answer to its basic list of demands: not just Land and Liberty but Health, Education, Housing, Work, and Regional Autonomy, among others. "This is what all the Indian campesinos of Mexico want," he said. "And until we get it we won't stop fighting."

Rubén and the other committee members we talked with were intelligent, soft-spoken, and knowledgeable about their communities' needs, but an abyss yawned the moment a foreign journalist asked about the Zapatista National Liberation Army's demands vis-à-vis the Mexican state. If a peace treaty should be signed granting autonomy to Las Cañadas, a territory of about two million acres, would the committee allow state authorities—troops, judges, police—to come into the region? The answer was no. Would the Zapatistas lay down their arms? Never. Could they see the Mexican government, or any government, accepting what was, in effect, an independent state within a state? Again, the answer was that the

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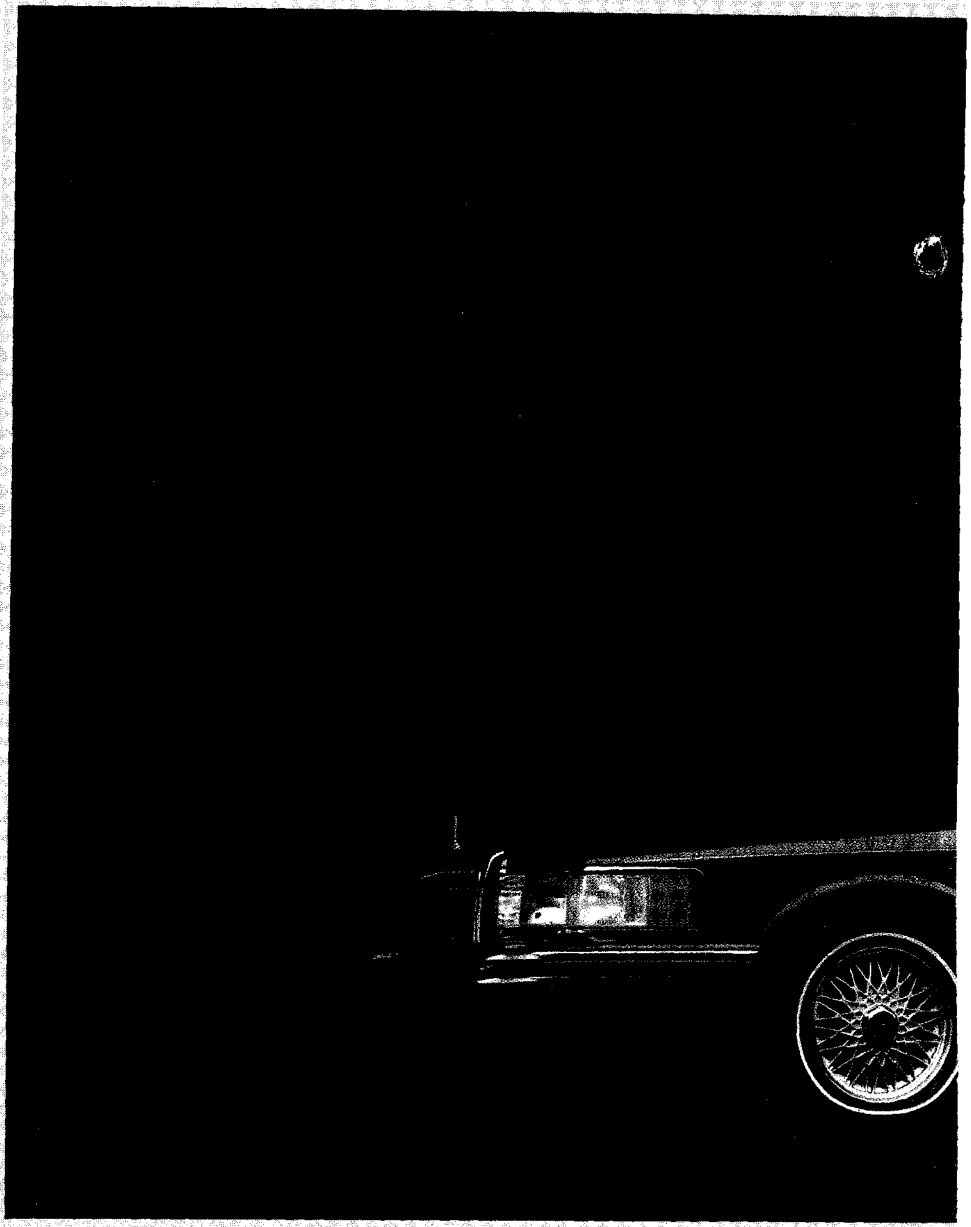

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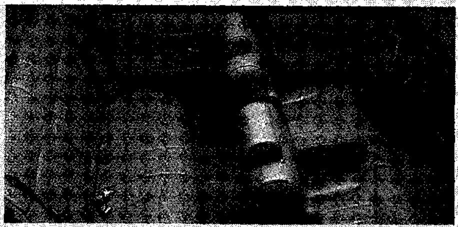

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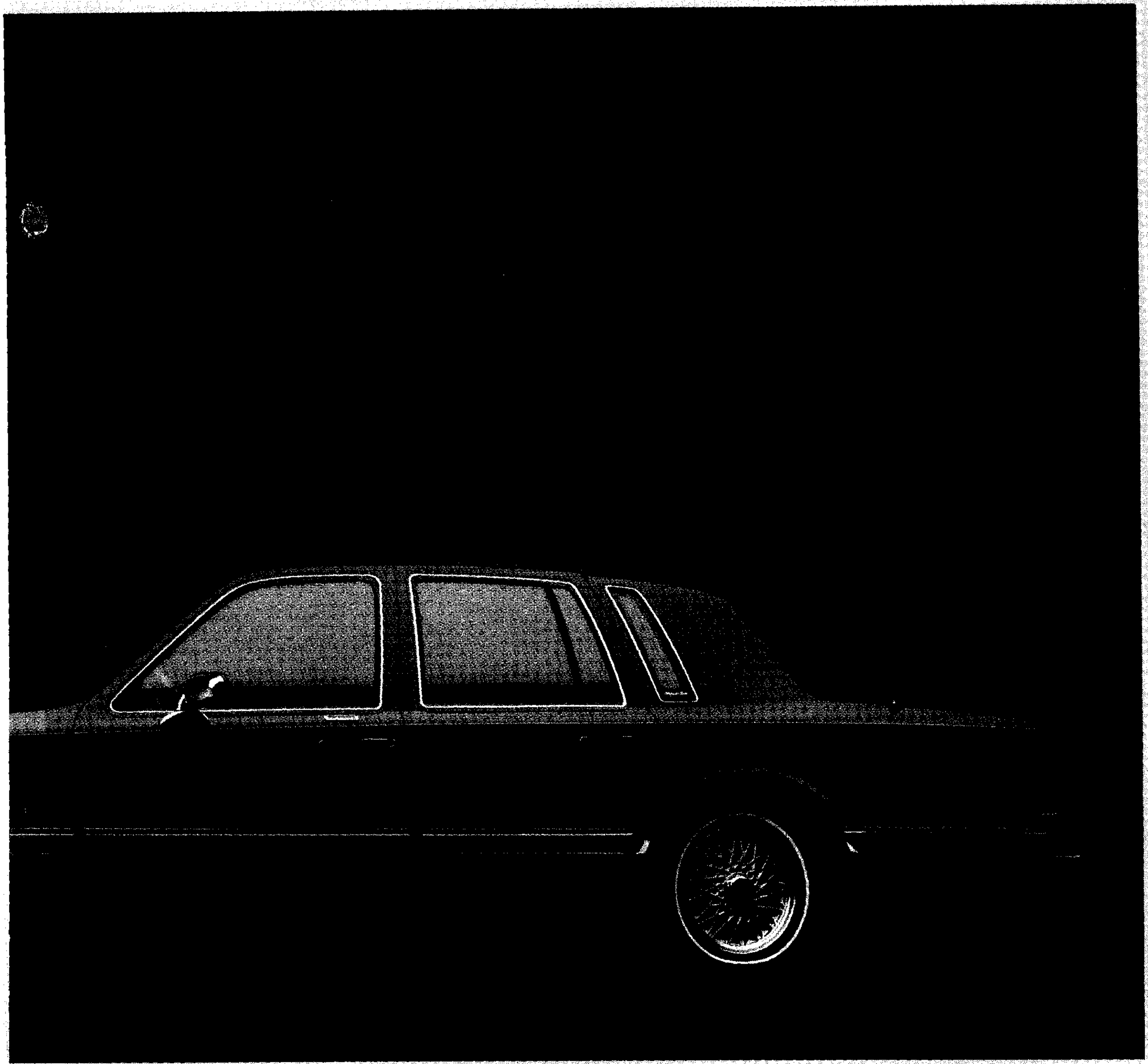

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Zapatistas would never lay down their arms. What about the elections in August? Would the Zapatistas allow voting booths to be installed? Rubén was frank: "We Zapatistas have no opinion about the elections; we don't care who wins, because we have no experience in this business of politicians and votes." The main point of the Zapatista war proclamation that was made public on January 1st, the ouster of President Salinas de Gortari, did not even come up.

I then asked three members of the committee—campesinos who used pointed sticks to plant the corn kernels in their *milpas*—to assume that the war had ended and the treaty had been signed. In this new future, what would be the most they could hope for, the most ambitious dream they could entertain? It took a long time to get across the point that they could have anything they wished for. "Some good farm equipment," came the reply at last from one of the men. Another said, "A dignified life with a little rest." The third added, "And a school, so that the children can be whatever they like when they grow up."

Much has been made—by, among others, Subcomandante Marcos, the green-eyed military leader of the Zapatistas, and Bishop Ruiz, who is now the mediator of the peace dialogue—of the unique cosmogony of the Indians of Chiapas, of their acutely different sense of reality and time. But it seemed to me then that the distance between Rubén and me, say, had less to do with these mystical elements than with the breathtaking differences in our needs. The Zapatistas burst on the scene January 1st and galvanized the country with their first war proclamation, which announced their troops' imminent arrival in Mexico City and called for the overthrow of the "dictator" Salinas de Gortari. They demanded respect for the indigenous people of Mexico, cancellation of the North American Free Trade Agreement signed last December, and the establishment of fair and free elections. The appeal was twofold, and the citizenry responded on both levels. In a mestizo country where people take great pride in their Indian blood—their membership in *la raza de bronce*—and train themselves to ignore the suffering of the nine million people who identify themselves as Indians in the census, the spectacle of a Mayan insurrection made a tarnished self-image glow brightly again. And at a moment when the government of Salinas de Gortari appeared to have scored an unequivocal triumph with a program that overturned all the old nationalist, populist tenets and opened Mexico to an avalanche of gringo merchandise and culture (Michael Jackson's last concert, it should be recalled, was in Mexico City), nothing could have been more moving than the spectacle of a band of impoverished Indians tearing down the Salinista myths. The Zapatistas said, "This country is not rich, and it is not democratic. It is corrupt, it is poor, it is Indian, it is us, and we are going to save the rest of you." But Rubén's priorities, it was now clear, were not fair and free elections and a freer press. They were more arable land, a tractor, and a sixth-grade education for his children and Vicente's. The divide between the committee members and mestizo, urban Mexico was one of inconceivable want.

After the committee members left, one of our number started to build a cooking fire from scraps of garbage and corn husks lying about. A woman stepped up and invited us to use her hearth instead. She spoke halting Spanish to us (something that most of the women in the region are too shy to do, preferring to stick to Tzeltal), and she wore a faded modern-style dress instead of the multicolored, ribbon-and-lace-trimmed frocks customary among the Tzeltal. Before I walked into her house, I had decided that these were signs of prosperity; and perhaps, by the standards of the village, they were. The hearth was set in the back corner of a one-room shack. The furniture was a rickety wooden table, a chair occupied by a very old woman with tangled gray hair, and, near the door, a tiny hammock in which an eight-day-old baby lay sleeping. Señora Ana, our hostess, told us that this was her tenth child. She looked about forty years old, and exhausted, but she said that she had married when she was fourteen, and had had a baby just about every year since, so she couldn't have been much older than twenty-five. All her children were born on this dirt floor, which was densely inhabited by voracious ticks. The midwife had been her mother—the old woman, who was now helping me extract a swelling tick from my hand, and was amused that I should be so horrified by it. The household children scampered about, the littlest girl carrying her toddler brother on her back. Every woman in the village had ten children, or twelve, or even more, Señora Ana said as she moved her family's meal of boiled beans off the fire to make room for our pot. We prepared our packages of instant noodle soup feeling hot with shame, because the other women in the village had lined up to watch us through the wide gaps in the wall planks and shrieked with laughter when we opened the seasoning packets and sprinkled them on the boiling noodles. "*Vitaminas!*" I heard them say to one another in Spanish. The *caxlanes* put vitamins in their food; that is why they are so big and strong.

That night, we put up our hammocks and sleeping bags in a large shack that served as the *ejido's* meeting room, and the children crept in silently and poked at the sleeping bags, wondering at their softness, and sniffed our cameras, our drinking water, and our notebooks. When we put out the candles to go to sleep, it was late, but they were lined up behind the gaping planks, staring.

PRESIDENT SALINAS'S son is named Emiliano, after Zapata. So is one of the sons of the new PRI Presidential candidate, Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León. Prominent in this administration are former student-movement leaders and radical activists, like Arturo Warman, the agrarian attorney. Salinas appointed the former rector of the National University, an intellectual with a reputation for probity, first to set up a National Commission of Human Rights, then to direct the Attorney General's office—a Medusa's head of institutionalized violence and corruption—and, now, the Ministry of the Interior, which is in charge of internal security. Salinas does not get much credit for these moves, or for the fact that he has faced down the military and the right wing of his party and has handled the Chiapas conflict with remarkable restraint. The lack of enthusiasm can be attributed to the fact that he has also restructured the state and the financial system in ways that have finished ruining the likes of the people of Las Cañadas and have also allowed about two dozen families to monopolize half the country's private wealth (outside of the drug trade). The fact remains, however, that the social-welfare and governmental-reform programs of the Salinas administration have drawn on a large pool of committed and skilled administrators, many of them former militants of the radical left or, like Manuel Camacho Solís, Salinas's designated peace commissioner in Chiapas, from the reformist wing of the PRI.

I talked to Camacho recently here in San Cristóbal, where he had returned in the hope of jump-starting the stalled peace dialogue. Camacho, forty-eight, was appointed the mayor of Mexico City in 1988 and served until last year, when he resigned, indignant that President Salinas had not designated him the PRI Presidential candidate. The former mayor did not disguise his anger over Salinas's choice of Luis Donaldo Colosio, even though he was offered the Foreign Ministry as a consolation prize. His lack of party discipline enraged the PRI, and contributed to the impression, once he had been named peace commissioner, that he was a man acting very much alone. As a foreign-educated, modernizing technocrat who believed that Salinas's economic reforms should be tempered with additional social programs for the poor, Camacho had more in common with Colosio than with the old-time Party hacks, who loathed the reforms and turned every social program into a private till. It must have been particularly painful for him when, following Colosio's murder in Tijuana, he was accused of plotting the crime by the Party rabble at the candidate's wake.

On the evening of the day of Colosio's murder, troops surrounded the hotel here where Camacho had his Peace Commission headquarters, and the city was plunged into what felt like a virtual state of siege. The reporters who were staying at Camacho's hotel, and who had developed a great deal of respect

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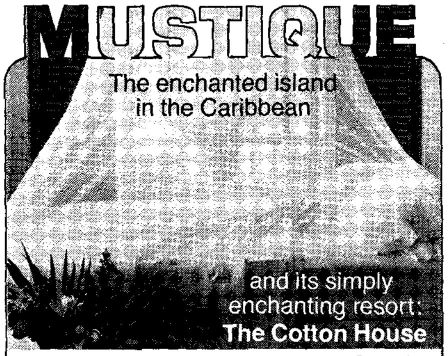

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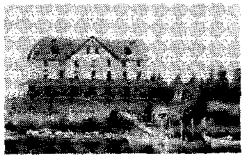

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and even affection for him over the weeks, watched in silence as the Peace Commissioner, a lanky figure, paced up and down for hours on the veranda, alone in the gloom. He left for Mexico City the following morning, and he had not returned or made any public statements until the day I saw him. But he had already accomplished a great deal during his first stay here.

Together with his team, the team from the Zapatista National Liberation Army, and the visionary mediator Bishop Ruiz, Camacho had worked out specific solutions to all but two of the Zapatistas' thirty-four demands. (The government refused to consider the Zapatistas' demands having to do with the elections and Salinas's overthrow.) The solutions included budget provisions and administrative measures approved by the government ministries involved in each case.

On the morning I talked with Camacho, he seemed optimistic that the peace dialogue would soon begin again. The Zapatistas had just put out a communiqué expressing their continuing commitment to the talks. A difficult agreement had been reached between the federal government and the many activist campesino organizations in Chiapas: the peasants had agreed to stop taking over haciendas and the government had agreed to review all their land claims on the previous two months' takeovers. The Mexican Army had issued a communiqué in which it expressed its unconditional support for a political solution to the Chiapas crisis, and the country's leading intellectuals, who have in general terms been supportive of the Zapatistas, had put out a statement calling on them to return to the negotiating table. The National Episcopal Conference had expressed its support for Samuel Ruiz's role in the peace talks. Reforms of the electoral law of Chiapas had been proposed at record speed to curtail the power of the local caciques, who deliver votes to the PRI and devour the money from the federal government. It seemed then that the stasis could be broken. I asked Camacho how it had happened that the most significant outbreak of armed revolt in Mexico in the last fifty years had ended in peace talks after just twelve days of war, and he replied that this had been the result of (a) the high cost of the war for both parties, and (b) Salinas's "political imagination" in designing and applying a strategy to deal with the Zapatistas swiftly enough to allow the government to retake the initiative.

I asked him if, given all the changes he had just outlined, it could be said that the war had worked. He appeared startled for a moment, but then he said, "Up to now. But if it starts up again it won't work. It'll be a civil war."

The effect that the war had had on the government's thinking, he went on, had indeed been great. "Because every idea we had had up to then had to be reëxamined," he explained. "Violence begins where politics ends, and we had to come to terms with the fact that, politically, what worked before no longer works.

"What this led us to in the negotiations was to realize that there could be no ambiguity in our answers. This is not to say that we had to be soft—only that we had to offer basic, simple discourse as a way of recovering a legitimacy that had been lost. So how do we offer a new legitimacy that takes the Zapatistas into account? That is the central question. We can't offer more than we can accomplish, and we have to figure out how to offer concrete things in the short term."

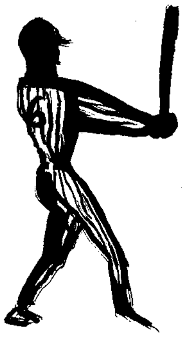
True to his PRI background, Camacho has a knack for producing *conceptuoso* statements that on second look turn out to have little substantial information in them. By these standards, he was unusually frank in our talk. I asked him what could cause the negotiations to fail. "An accident," he replied—meaning, presumably, another sinister event like the murder of Colosio. "Or if the E.Z.L.N. fails to realize that things changed with the murder—that there is a conservative backlash in the country. If the Zapatistas believe that they can maintain their popularity even if they do not come back to the negotiations, they will lose a great deal of strength. In practical terms, if they consolidate what they have won so far they can go down in history as one of the most successful armed movements ever, but if they do not work out the political mathematics of this correctly they can lose a great deal of what they've already achieved."

AT this writing, the area that the Zapatistas control is surrounded by troops. The Mexican Army took the measure of the Zapatista fighting forces in January, and since then has conducted frequent surveillance of their territory by air. Food and other supplies have been allowed through in strictly regulated and limited quantities. The rainy season is about to start, and if the campesinos don't plant now the corn and beans that they subsist on will not be available for harvest in the fall. The ostensible reason for the journalists' visit to the Zapatista zone was a military ceremony commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of Zapata's assassination in an ambush laid for him by his Carrancista fellow-revolutionaries. The ceremony was a moving event, because so much effort had clearly gone into mobilizing the region's meagre resources for the benefit of journalists, but militarily it was not impressive. The village where the ceremony took place produced an electric generator and sound equipment. A platform was set up for the Clandestine Revolutionary Indian Committee and the military command. The village women turned out in freshly laundered dresses trimmed with bright-colored ribbon and lace, and adorned their tiniest babies' bald heads with caps made of ribbon and crocheted flowers. Speeches were made on the platform, in Tzeltal, but with frequent references in Spanish to the *cabrón gobierno*—the son-of-a-bitch government—and to the *traición*, or betrayal, of Zapata by Carranza, which was the watershed act that stood as a warning to all campesinos never to trust a government. And then there was the centerpiece of the ceremony: a parade by the Zapatista troops, three hundred of them, sweating through their ski masks, wearing homemade ammunition belts and bike packs over their hand-stitched brown-and-green uniforms. It is not clear what message the Zapatistas wanted to convey to the press about their present situation, but the message we got was that, if the current assortment of aged hunting weapons and machine guns is any indication, the Zapatista National Liberation Army is not a modern army in any sense of the term. (This could change overnight, of course, if it should turn out that the Zapatistas are behind a wave of kidnappings of millionaire Mexicans during the last two years. A great many weapons could be acquired with the ransom money.)

Do the Zapatistas really believe that they can march to Mexico City and overthrow the regime with whatever weapons it is that they do have? This is the question I put to the military head of the E.Z.L.N., the light-skinned man who calls himself Subcomandante Marcos.

"The war isn't over yet," he said. "You'll have to wait and see."

He is good at entrances. There had been four days of waiting in Zapatista territory through a succession of yes-no-maybe replies to my request for an interview. Late on the last night, I was awakened by a flashlight shining in my face. Behind it stood Marcos, smiling. He turned out to be an insomniac in desperate need of conversation, and to be more articulate, cosmopolitan, humorous, and coquettishly manipulative than any guerrilla leader of El Salvador or Nicaragua who ever locked horns with the press. (But no less narcissistic than any other politician.) And—perhaps this is the secret of the great good will he has generated in the media—he did not pretend to offer easy replies to difficult questions.



He has become famous for the long letters that he pens apropos of anything at all, which appear regularly in the press, but his talk is better. On paper, his prose is frequently treaclish and self-eulogizing; his speech is clear and imaginative, and comes out in perfectly constructed sentences that sound as if they had been written. Puffing thoughtfully on a pipe through his ski mask, he elaborated on the answer to my question about whether it was really possible for the Zapatistas to take the capital. "The war isn't over," he repeated. "We will take Mexico City, although not necessarily in physical terms. Weren't we there already by January 2nd? We were everywhere, on the lips of everyone—in the subway, on the radio. And our flag was in the Zócalo"—the central plaza. "How often does it happen that an armed group's declaration of war is read in public just a few feet from the National Palace, or that the government negotiates with a group that brings its weapons to the table? None of this was planned. We won the lottery: we thought that it would take years to achieve what we accomplished in twelve days! What helped us was Salinas; he was always our best ally, because he constructed such a big *tramoya*"—a jury-rigging of false appearances—"on a base so fragile that it fell apart almost immediately.

"The way Mexico is entering the new economic order is based on a lie," Marcos went on. "Farmers in the United States have tractors and machinery, and we are planting our corn with a stick and using slash-and-burn methods. But the government says, 'Our problems are over—we're now a part of the First World.' It has to take a step back and say, '*This* is the country we are and *this* is what we have, and anyone who wants to deal with us will have to take this reality into account.' "

There was nothing fervent about Marcos, and his objections to the unappetizing triumphalism of the Salinas administration hit home. Of medium height, broad-shouldered, and, at a guess, in his mid-thirties, his chest crisscrossed with bandoliers, he slouched easily in the passenger seat of a car where we were talking, to take advantage of its lights, and produced a flowing historical narrative (it is his version of the Zapatistas' origins that I have given), a critique of guerrilla theory, and a vision of the Zapatistas' role in bringing injustice to an end which were totally captivating. Only slowly did it dawn on me that he, too, was a utopian, dealing in closed universes, good and evil, and dreaming of egalitarian, redeeming poverty just as the visionary Church does, or the campesino communities so eager to pursue a vision of hope. He was a hip Anabaptist with a gun who had replaced the narrow dogmas of the left with a shimmering vision of *communitas.*

Skimming easily over the fact that campesinos who chose not to take up arms are now under surveillance and not allowed to leave the Zapatista-controlled zone, he explained how the magical army in the jungle had come about. "We gave military action second place to organization of the population," he said. "As a result, it's very difficult to draw a line between the combat force and the support population. We say that here even the hens are Zapatistas. If your tendency is to become a mass-based army, then you can't put so much emphasis on the old, traditional vertical guerrilla discipline—the you're-with-us-or-you're-dead school of thought. You can't raise the step so high that nobody can climb it; you have to make room for all the people to participate to the best of their abilities, and so you are always in the process of looking for what unites people, and not what separates—what adds, and not what subtracts. That's why we are not a party and we are not a guerrilla force: we are an army with a flag wide enough to embrace everyone—liberty, justice, and democracy. And that's why our goal can't be the creation of a New Man or a New World, in the old guerrilla style. The Zapatista Army wants to open the door to the waiting room of a new world—to create a space in which people can think about what is needed to create a new world, in which armies will no longer be necessary."

According to one rumor, the Zapatistas were fully prepared to be slaughtered on January 1st, and convinced that this sacrifice would ignite a political brushfire that would redeem Mexico. According to another rumor, admittedly biased, they were so prepared for victory that the leadership told the troops to pick out the houses in Ocosingo that they wanted to live in after the war was over. What the Zapatistas, and Marcos, do not appear to have been prepared for was what happened: a wave of national joy and solidarity at their appearance, followed by an urgent plea to negotiate before any more blood was shed (total losses in the two-week war were estimated by the Church at around four hundred), which, in turn, was followed by the current creeping onslaught of indifference. Marcos was far too alert and intellectually curious to have remained willfully oblivious of the truth, and, indeed, it appeared to be gnawing at him.

"We cannot make the leap into the new world ourselves," he said. "We're just an army. If there were a political movement right now with our same banner—democracy, justice, and liberty—the E.Z.L.N. would subordinate itself to that. We do not want to—we are not able to—take on the political leadership; there has to be a party, and a mass movement. The problem is that this movement is scattered at the moment, and that it expects too much from us. At the beginning of the dialogue, we placed a great deal of hope in the civil society. We thought that it would be able to do a lot, but, after the dialogue ended, that society said to us, 'Tell us what to do,' and we said, 'We can't, we're just an army.' It seems that the population doesn't have enough of a consensus, and the regime is betting that this mass movement will never come together, and that it will be able to remain in power through Zedillo."

What if Zedillo should win fairly?

"We will recognize him as a legitimate interlocutor for us."

And why did the negotiations seem to be stalled?

"It's an impasse that doesn't worry us," he said. "We doubt if it will be possible to carry out the changes we want without more deaths. Whether the dialogue continues or not, we are still at war: we are still saying that we want Salinas to leave, and he is still calling us 'transgressors.' "

Marcos focussed obsessively on Salinas, the way he focussed on the poverty of the campesinos of this state, but Mexico is more complicated than that: along with the humiliated Maya of Chiapas and Huichol of Hidalgo, there are farmers in Jalisco who use tractors, and middle-class accountants in Querétaro who send their kids to college; and the government that the Zapatistas would like to depose was until recently quite popular. Even if the attack on San Cristóbal on January 1st unveiled a deep underlying dissatisfaction with Salinas and with the PRI in general, the Zapatistas' bet that people outside Las Cañadas are willing to go to war to overthrow either or both is, at best, chancy. Is the risk worth it? If the war proceeds, will the people of Las Cañadas be better off than they were before? If the revolution triumphs, will a devastated war economy (even the present economy had zero real growth in the last decade) allow for the subsidies and public works that Salinas de Gortari is now willing to pump into the region? If the revolution's organizers had preached birth control and handicrafts for the export market, say, instead of utopia, would the results in the end have been less spiritually rich and more materially advantageous? Would *that* trade-off have been worth it? I

HAPPY BIRT
HAPPY HALLOWEEN
HAPPY EASTER
HAPPY HOLIDAYS
ANNIVERSARY
NEW YEAR
MERRY XMAS
HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY
Victoria Roberts

"We used to entertain a great deal."

told Marcos that I thought the Zapatistas had obtained much in the last few weeks in their struggle to transform Chiapas—and, indeed, the electoral process in Mexico. Wasn't it time for them to cash in their winnings and call off the bet?

"The coin is still in the air," he answered. "There's still a considerable way to go to know if we were right or not."

WE had been talking for a couple of hours, and Marcos showed no sign of being ready to retire for the night. Feeling like a participant in a relay marathon, I went to wake up another reporter and a couple of photographers who were sharing a car with me on this trip. It was the new moon, the breeze had turned chilly, and all the stars were out. We sat in a circle while the photographers worked and Marcos waited expectantly for more questions. He needed to talk. He had been convinced, he said, that he would be killed on January 1st, and the days he had been living since felt like a bonus. Soon, he was certain, he really would be dead. Perhaps that was why he was writing so compulsively, he mused, and why he was unable to censor his answers to us or stand on formality. When you stare death in the face, he warned us, pretense seems useless. "Am I moving too much?" he asked the startled photographers.

Assured that he wasn't, he amused himself by inventing an autobiography, inspired by the odd questions that foreign journalists came up with. One journalist, not long ago, had asked him his opinion on gay rights. Now he told us—he wasn't serious—that he had worked in massage parlors and had been fired from a job as a waiter in San Francisco for being gay. Then he returned to the task of fielding the questions we were halfheartedly lobbing.

Why had the Zapatistas chosen January 1st to attack?

"Because we weren't ready before," he said. "In January of '93, the Clandestine Revolutionary Indian Committee gave us a year to prepare for war: 'Choose the date and the time and let us know,' they said. We didn't want a date before the PRI announced its new candidate, because we didn't want it to look as if we were trying to influence the succession. We thought of Columbus Day, but we weren't ready. We thought of November 20th"—the anniversary of the Mexican Revolution—"but one of our units couldn't get there in time. We thought of December 25th, but something or other happened to change that. Then we decided on December 31st, but, typically, we were late, so the war started on January 1st."

We hinted that we had a long drive ahead, and that it was nearly dawn, our departure time, but Marcos was not to be stopped. He went off to fetch one of his lieutenants, a Major Rolando, whom he had decided I should interview. For thirty minutes, I asked the yawning, shivering Major Rolando as many questions as we could both handle about how he had joined the Zapatistas when he was a construction worker in San Cristóbal. The Subcomandante was still chatting with one of the photographers—a comely young woman, whose charms were evidently not lost on him. I thanked Major Rolando for his time and fell into sleep. An hour later, Marcos shook me awake. "You'll be late," he said. "I already woke the others. Go get some coffee." And then, before I could realize that this was the last I would see of him, he trudged down the path toward the valley and was gone.

It was daylight by the time we were ready to leave, and the children were clustered around again, transfixed by the wondrous contents of our car trunk. People came up the footpaths to say goodbye as our car lurched and bounced along the gully that passed for a road. A few asked for things we might think of bringing back if we ever returned—a basketball for the kids, a pair of reading glasses for an old man who had lost his. Mostly, they just waved. It was hard to think that a series of errors of judgment or pride by the parties in charge of this war could lead to a scorched-earth attack on this village, an aerial bombing, death. The trip back would be long, as the members of the Clandestine Revolutionary Indian Committee whom I talked to the previous afternoon had solicitously pointed out. Were there many campesinos in this city I wrote for, New York? I informed them that, in truth, there were very few left. That was too bad, one of them said—they had wanted to send their regards. "But in any case," he added, "please convey our very best greetings to the people you know in that place." ♦

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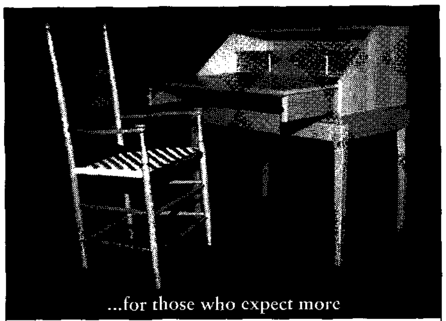
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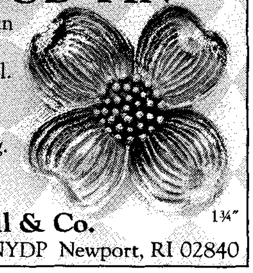

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ANNALS OF LAW

JUDGE MOTLEY'S VERDICT

Forty years after the N.A.A.C.P. won Brown v. Board of Education, the first woman on its legal team discusses the battle over integration—then and now.

BY MARIE BRENNER

FROM time to time when Constance Baker Motley is invited to recall her glory days as an N.A.A.C.P. lawyer in the nineteen-fifties and sixties, she is challenged by law students who think of her as an anachronism, a holdover from a time when it was believed that undoing the pathology between the races could be accomplished largely through the courts. This was the case last October, for example, when Motley, a New York federal judge, spent a week as jurist-in-residence at the law school of the University of Indiana in Bloomington. Motley is popular on the law-school circuit; she and her former colleagues at the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense and Educational Fund ride a crest of civil-rights-era nostalgia.

Brown was followed by years of legal battles to enforce it, and Connie Motley fought many of them. (*Photograph by Eileen Travell.*)

On May 17, 1954, when the Supreme Court issued its unanimous ruling in Brown v. Board of Education which overturned school segregation, Motley, then a Legal Defense Fund trial lawyer, was thirty-two years old. She was "the girl in the office" then, the drudge, but over the next ten years she became the only woman at the plaintiff's table in the Jim Crow South as she and other lawyers tried case after case to enforce the Brown decision; she helped to desegregate lunch counters, schools, and buses, and in those years she also argued ten cases in front of the Supreme Court. In Montgomery, Alabama, she recently recalled, she argued five different appeals in one day as the school boards tried to put off the evil moment of desegregation. In Jackson, Mississippi, a local paper referred to her as "the Motley woman." She was chided for her fashionable clothes. Her presence in court often brought dozens of spectators, simply to marvel at the fact that a Negro woman could actually be a lawyer. But the majority of the law students who gathered to hear her at Indiana last October were only vaguely aware of her importance. They weren't yet born when she travelled from courtroom to courtroom through Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia.

A few days before Motley arrived in Indiana, Alfred Aman, the law-school dean, arranged a display of the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense Fund's achievements in the foyer of the law-school building: among other items, news accounts of Charlayne Hunter entering the University of Georgia in 1961

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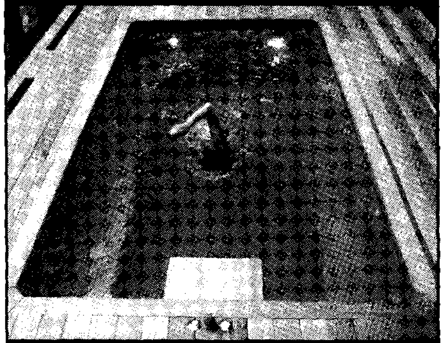

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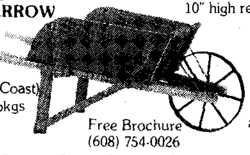

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and James Meredith desegregating the University of Mississippi the same year were visible in a glass case. The moot-court room at the law school was filled to capacity on the afternoon Motley delivered her lecture. That night, she spoke at a dinner given by the Black Law Students Association, or B.L.S.A. She recalled the many school-desegregation cases that had led to and followed Brown, but after she spoke she was kept busy answering sharp questions about her own experiences, posed by several of the B.L.S.A. members: the narrative of Constance Motley's life seemed to contradict the reality of modern racial politics. “Shouldn't you have fought for equal schools?” one student asked her, and went on to cite the breakdown in black communities, the black-on-black crime, the miserable test scores, and the loss of pride among black men. “Your generation always used the word ‘mainstream,’” another student said, and asked, “What is wrong with *black* culture?” Motley was brisk with the B.L.S.A. students. “I don't know what black culture is,” she said, as if attempting to camouflage her irritation. When Motley returned to New York, she told me that she had been startled at being asked to defend herself. At this point in her life, she has come to expect, at the very least, a certain degree of respect for what she and the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense Fund accomplished. A mistake to fight for integration? The guiding principle of Constance Baker Motley's life has been her belief that the law is the primary instrument of social reform. “In my early days at the N.A.A.C.P., I could never have imagined this situation at the colleges today,” she told me.

A FEW weeks later, I went to visit Judge Motley at the United States Court House in downtown Manhattan. I took the elevator to the twentieth floor, but Motley was not yet in her chambers; she was in court, hearing pre-trial motions on a case that involved the alleged mistreatment of a Black Muslim by prison officials.

The décor of Motley's chambers was very feminine, with floral chintz curtains and pink walls. Judge Motley's law clerk had left a stack of faded newspapers for me on the conference table. A headline on the top paper, a copy of the September 11, 1963, *Times*, read, “WALLACE ENDS RESISTANCE AS GUARD IS FEDERALIZED; MORE SCHOOLS INTEGRATE.” The news story described the events of the previous day, when, after months of resistance by Governor George Wallace, the schools in Birmingham and two other Alabama cities were integrated. It told of a blond high-school girl in Birmingham who had cried when she learned that black children were enrolled in her school. “I hope my momma heard, so she'll come get me,” she said. The *Times* correspondent in Birmingham related that seventy-five youths had shouted, “Keep the niggers out!” “Go home!” and “Two, four, six, eight, we don't want to integrate!” I flipped through the stack of newspapers. In one, I saw a photograph, snapped in the hallway of the federal courthouse in Birmingham in 1962, that showed Motley wearing a fashionable black coat and matching hat and an elegant printed scarf. She was looking down at the floor, as if to distance herself from the mob, but she did not look particularly afraid; in fact, she appeared oddly serene.

There was also an envelope of documents referring to Constance Motley that went back as far as fifty years. They included the expected awards letters and banquet menus, and some unexpected examples of the way she handled her anger: Motley had kept a copy of every complaint she filed with the Taxi and Limousine Commission about drivers who failed to pick her up. (“Complainant, who is a Negro, charged that respondent discriminated against her . . . because of complainant's color.”) Then I came to a single-spaced letter signed “Anthropologist”:

> MRS. MOTLEY:
>
> When you made your plea before Judge Tuttle, how many windows did you raise to let your stinking body odor escape? How much cologne did you use to saturate your clothing with to prevent others from smelling your stinking body? . . . It is hard to see how any person with an ounce of brains would get up and argue that the nigger is equal to other races. It just is not so.

As I finished the letter, Judge Motley walked into the room. I asked her about the letter, and she told me she could hardly remember receiving it. “I used to get letters like that all the time. I wonder why I even kept it,” she said.

CONSTANCE BAKER MOTLEY is seventy-two years old. When she was admitted to Columbia Law School, in 1943, her photograph ran in a rotogravure for African-Americans, and she was held up as a role model. “She's one of the few Negro women enrolled in Columbia University's famous School of Law,” the caption noted. As time passed, she became the first African-American woman to be a New York state senator, a borough president (Manhattan), a federal judge. Judge Motley is tall and large-boned, but she has delicate features and dainty hands and feet. She is judicial, formal, precise. Unlike many of the civil-rights activists of her generation, she is far more comfortable discoursing on the history of the Fourteenth Amendment than delivering an impassioned speech. Given what she has been through, her dry, legalistic demeanor may be her most remarkable achievement. She has been in jail cells with Martin Luther King, Jr., where the air was so foul that she became faint; she spent long nights in Birmingham churches singing freedom songs; she stayed with Medgar Evers, and, under armed guard, in the Birmingham home of a Legal Defense Fund attorney whose house was repeatedly bombed during the fifties and sixties; racist insults have been hurled at her by white lawyers. Yet, for all this, her memories tend to be a lawyer's memories. She focusses on the method by which school integration was actually achieved, the litigation strategies, the motions and sustaining orders, the quashing of subpoenas, the emergency appeals. It was her knowledge of the law that enabled her to transcend the emotionalism of the Jim Crow courts. In her 1992 memoir, “In My Place,” Charlayne Hunter-Gault recalls sitting with Constance Motley at the plaintiff's table in a Georgia courtroom during her attempt to enter the University of Georgia: “She barely acknowledged my presence. . . . I never, for example, heard her laugh in the presence of any state or university officials, except as a barely masked form of sarcasm. It seemed as if this was the most important mission in her life. In fact, she often talked about the South in those days as if it were a war zone and she was fighting in a revolution. No one—be it defendant or plaintiff—was going to distract her from carrying her task to a successful conclusion."

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UNTIL she was a teen-ager, Connie Baker had never heard of Harriet Tubman or Sojourner Truth. She attended a New Haven school where she was one of the few Negro students. Her parents, originally from the tiny Caribbean island of Nevis, moved to New Haven at the turn of the century and became part of the clannish West Indian community there. Connie Baker had eleven brothers and sisters. Although the family was poor, the children had an air of superiority, from their parents' years at British schools. The Bakers lived on the outskirts of the Yale campus, and Connie's father was a cook at Skull & Bones; in fact, most of the Baker family was associated with Yale—her uncles also worked in the university's clubs. "They told all the little white Yalies what to do," Judge Motley's niece and namesake Connie Royster told me.

Nevertheless, Connie was once turned away from a Connecticut beach near New Haven, and some restaurants in New Haven wouldn't serve blacks. She learned about black heroes and heroines and discovered the writings of W. E. B. Du Bois at church lectures.

Last October, Judge Motley was inducted into the National Women's Hall of Fame, in Seneca Falls, New York. The list of women inducted with her included the physicist Rosalyn Yalow, who had won a Nobel Prize; the civil-rights leader and founder of the Children's Defense Fund Marian Wright Edelman; the labor organizer Dolores Huerta; and Wilma Mankiller, the chief of the Cherokee Nation. The mother of Emmett Till, a black teen-ager who was murdered in Mississippi in 1955, accepted an award for Rosa Parks, who had inspired the 1955-56 bus boycott in Montgomery when she refused to give up a front seat. "Rosa Parks was willing to pay the cost to save the lost," Emmett Till's mother said. Most of the women used the occasion to make political speeches, but Judge Motley spoke about a white man named Clarence Blakeslee. "There was no money for me to go to college," she said. "I went to work at the National Youth Administration, and one day I gave a speech at a black community house. Clarence Blakeslee had built the community house. He was a contractor who had done a lot of work at Yale. He had made millions of dollars, and what he did with those millions was to help educate black Americans." Blakeslee had been impressed by the teen-ager's speech and had asked her where she would attend college. When Connie Baker told him that her parents could not afford to send her, he offered to pay for her entire education. "Clarence Blakeslee was a white man responsible for my being here today," she said.

Connie Baker travelled to Fisk University, in Nashville, by train, riding in a Jim Crow car; she was eager to experience segregation. Her parents were frightened for her; they themselves refused to cross the Mason-Dixon Line. On her first trip home, she brought them back a "Colored Only" sign. At Fisk, she met, for the first time, black students from middle-class families in the South, who were ensconced in black communities, with their own clubs and churches. "It was my first experience in a black institution with black people who were just like white people, as we used to say," Judge Motley said of Fisk. "Their parents were college educated, they had wealth. For the first time, I met blacks who were doing something other than cooking and waiting on tables. They intended to go back into the black community." White people, however, were the standard, and Connie Baker could not understand why the Fisk students were not interested in advancing in the white world. It was, she told me, the enigma of her college days. "All of our lives, we had to be like white people. We had to dress, think, and act like white people," she recalled, yet her classmates did not want to become part of the white community.

At Columbia Law School, she began to work as a volunteer at the N.A.A.C.P.'s Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., a subsidiary that Thurgood Marshall and his mentor, Charles Houston, had created in 1939. It was usually called the Inc. Fund, for short. Marshall seemed to find little remarkable in the fact that she was a woman, and took her on as a clerk. After she graduated, in 1946, she began working full-time. Her salary was fifty dollars a week. Besides Motley, the entire staff consisted of Marshall and three other lawyers, one of whom worked part time. At first, Motley worked on housing cases, challenging the restrictive covenants that excluded blacks from buying real estate in white neighborhoods. Marshall was then involved in several cases to integrate universities at the graduate-school level, such as the ones in which Ada Sipuel sought admission to the University of Oklahoma

College of Law and Heman Sweatt to the University of Texas School of Law. It was Marshall's strategy to argue the graduate-school cases under Plessy v. Ferguson, the onerous 1896 Supreme Court decision that upheld existing separate-but-equal doctrine and set up the legal framework for segregation. Marshall argued that since there were no black law schools in Texas and Oklahoma, Sipuel and Sweatt should be admitted to the white institutions. Ultimately, of course, in Brown, the Supreme Court ruled against separate facilities, arguing that even where they were equal segregation per se had a negative effect.

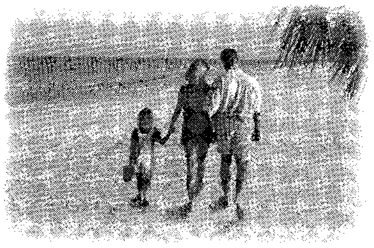
In 1949, when Connie Motley tried her first case, in Jackson, Mississippi, the people there had hardly ever seen a Negro lawyer before, and had never seen one who was a woman. She was married by then. Her husband, Joel Motley, was a New York real-estate broker whom she had met when they were living at the Harlem Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A., respectively. They had got married in August of 1946, and this was her first trip to the deep South ever; her husband worried about her. Her only experience in a courtroom had been observing the meticulous style of Charles Houston in a University of Maryland nursing-school case. Motley found it impressive that Houston wrote down every one of his exhibits and questions in advance and never deviated from his text.

Motley and her colleague Robert Carter, who is now also a federal judge, booked a Pullman to Jackson. (She had bought a new dress at Lord & Taylor for the trial.) The case was an equalization-of-salary suit originally brought by a teacher, Gladys Noel Bates. When Connie Motley walked into the courtroom in Jackson for the first time, she was appalled by a W.P.A. mural depicting the glories of lost Dixie which covered an entire wall. She remembers staring at the white women in their crinolines and hoopskirts on one side and the darkies hoisting cotton bales on the other. She had never imagined that on her first big case, when she needed all the poise she could muster, she would have to interrogate witnesses and offer arguments while being confronted with such a spectacle. She recalls that trial as one of the few occasions when she was almost overcome with rage.

Other memories of the trial also remain vivid. "When we got to court on the first day, we saw that all the seats were taken by whites, because the black people believed that they had to sit in the balcony," she told me. "But this court did not have a balcony, so the blacks stood along the walls. After the first session, Bob Carter told the people that, unlike in state court, in a federal court you could sit anywhere you wanted. The next morning, we got there at nine o'clock, and all the seats were taken by blacks."

She went on to say, "In those days, no black lawyers ever went to court. If they had a case, they got a white lawyer to go for them. Bob and I needed a local lawyer to appear and sign the complaint. This was the first case since Reconstruction where blacks had appeared as lawyers in a courtroom in Mississippi. We found a black lawyer who lived in Meridian, Mississippi—James Burns. He owned a little grocery store, and he was scared to death. When we were in court, he sat with his back to us. He was making notes. He wanted to give the impression that he was just local counsel. He wanted to convey that he was not the lawyer bringing the suit. On the second day of the trial, Bob Carter said to him, 'Go out and see if our witnesses are out there.' He went out bent over completely—again, showing that he knew his place as a black man. When we went to have dinner, he would disappear; he did not want to take the chance of being killed with us.

"From time to time, the judge would rule in our favor, and once Bob spoke to the judge about a witness who was speaking very softly. He said, 'Could you ask that witness to speak up, please?' The black people in Jackson had never seen that before, and when Bob went to get his hair cut at the barbershop that evening everyone was reënacting the white man being made to speak up so a black man could hear. The final day, the judge was very polite. He addressed me as Mrs. Motley. The judge was from the Mississippi coast, and had no hostility toward black people. So, on the last day, when Bob told our lawyer to go out and get our witnesses, Burns for the first time in the entire trial walked out erect. I said to Bob, 'At least we have accomplished something in this case.' "



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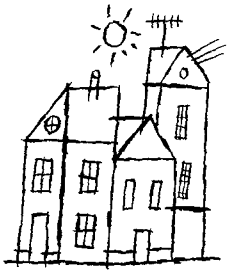
In the several TV movies made about the drama leading up to the Brown decision, the Inc. Fund is commonly portrayed as resembling a tabloid newsroom, filled with bantering black lawyers. The office jokes have become standards; one had it that Marshall called himself "H.N.I.C."—"head nigger in charge." In Jack Greenberg's book "Crusaders in the Courts," a history of the Inc. Fund that will be published this month, a different portrait emerges. Greenberg, now a Columbia Law School professor, started at the Inc. Fund several years after Connie Motley. For a while, they shared the same office. (When Greenberg, as a naïve young white lawyer, first met Motley, according to his new book, he was startled when she quickly corrected his use of the term "Negress," then in common use. "Negress," she said, "was like using the word 'tigress' or 'lioness,' and was offensive to women.") In one TV miniseries, "Separate but Equal," the actor Ron Silver portrayed Greenberg, and Sidney Poitier portrayed Thurgood Marshall. Greenberg recently told me that he was nettled by the histrionics. "The idea that Thurgood was waving his arms around in court yelling and screaming and grimacing!" Greenberg said. "Thurgood didn't do that. In fact, no lawyer does that. Except William Kunstler." The real atmosphere was "lawyers at work," Greenberg recalled, the pedestrian stuff of "following precedents and filing motions for preliminary injunctions." It was difficult to tell the difference between the Inc. Fund office and any other office, except that its occupants talked about race all the time.

"WHAT do you remember about the day of the Supreme Court's decision in Brown v. Board of Education?" I asked Judge Motley a few months ago. We were on a train on our way to Washington. It was the morning of the Supreme Court's memorial service for Thurgood Marshall, and Judge Motley had been asked to speak. At first, her memories were atmospheric—the pandemonium in the office, the joyous ringing of the telephones. That night, she recalled, she went home to her apartment on West End Avenue. She was proud of that apartment; the Motleys were the first black family to move into the building. Motley had big plans then for her two-year-old son, Joel—and, indeed, he ultimately graduated from Harvard Law School and became a partner in an investment-banking firm. Motley's memory of the day of the Brown decision focussed on Joel in his high chair. She had already realized, she told me, that the effect of Brown was going to be primarily psychological, and she informed her toddler that the Supreme Court had, that very day, undone segregation. She made no effort to explain it in terms a two-year-old might begin to comprehend, but she was convinced that Joel understood her.



When she got to the office the next morning, she learned that Walter White, the head of the N.A.A.C.P., had had to cancel a lecture date in Selma, Alabama. "Thurgood called me and said, 'You go, Connie'—very terse. He did not say, 'I will help you with your speech,' or give me any ideas. You were supposed to do it on your own. If you made a mess, you made a mess. That was the way Thurgood was. So I went to Selma that Sunday. And the place was jammed. It was a small church, and one man had even come in an oxcart."

It was Connie Motley's first real exposure to Southern black rural poverty. She recalled the drive from the airport in Birmingham to Selma, during which she looked out the window at tarpaper shacks and outhouses. She was not prepared for the starkness. "It sort of knocked me over," she said. The church was filled with people from all over Alabama, many of whom had saved their money to travel to hear Walter White. Thinking of that day in Alabama, she recalled that she knew immediately that the white people would fight Brown all the way. She saw her future in terms of a vast tapestry of court cases and problems, and worried about how the tiny Inc. Fund, with its minimal budget, could afford the years of litigation. On the flight back to New York, she recalled, her euphoria over the Brown decision faded, and she felt lost, with no idea what lay ahead.

As each Brown v. Board of Education milestone occurs, civil-rights legal scholars—Randall Kennedy among others—inevitably comment on the obliqueness of the Court's language, which led to years of legal maneuvers and the continued de-facto segregation that plagues inner-city schools. When the Brown decision came down, Motley recalls, it was initially viewed as a decision that prohibited segregation but not as one that required affirmative action from state officials. Connie Motley prepared many of the hundreds of court papers and arguments necessary to enforce Brown, yet she never became a darling of the civil-rights movement, perhaps because her skill as a litigator lay in her very thorough preparation and understanding of the arcana of the law.

Connie Motley first met Martin Luther King, Jr., in the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, in Atlanta. King was seen as a nuisance by the Inc. Fund, because his demonstrations had strained their ability to pursue school cases. In 1962, King had been enjoined by a court order from leading a march in Albany, Georgia. Motley arrived in Atlanta at one in the morning, in order to be in Judge Elbert Tuttle's court that day. Tuttle, an Eisenhower appointee, held relatively liberal views on race. He was born in California, and had once seen his mother leave her porch and stand at a bus stop with a black woman so that the bus would stop to pick her up. At the airport, Motley was met by the Legal Defense Fund's local counsel and, to her surprise, by William Kunstler, who was a private attorney at that time and had flown in from New York a few days before, claiming to represent Martin Luther King. Kunstler arranged with Motley and the other lawyers that he would make the first argument. "First of all, Judge Tuttle, let me introduce Mrs. Motley," Motley remembers him saying in court later that morning. Tuttle then said, "Mr. Kunstler, Mrs. Motley has been here so often that she could be a member of the court." The question at hand—whether the injunction against King's march was a preliminary one, and could be appealed—was a tricky point to argue. As Motley recalls it, Kunstler told Judge Tuttle, "Well, Mrs. Motley will argue that." With little preparation, Motley stood up and spoke. Tuttle overturned the injunction. "As I was walking out," she said, "who should be sit-

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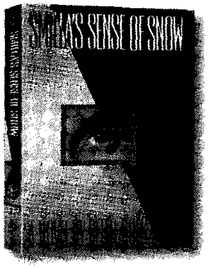

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ting in the front row but Martin Luther King!" Not long afterward, the Inc. Fund became King's primary counsel.

THE envelope of papers that Connie Motley keeps in her chambers includes a copy of a letter written by James Meredith on January 29, 1961, to Thurgood Marshall:

> I am submitting an application for admission to the University of Mississippi. I am seeking entrance for the second semester which begins the 8th of February. I am anticipating encountering some type of difficulty with the various agencies here in the State which are against my gaining entrance into the school. . . . I am making this move in, what I consider, the interest of and for the benefit of (1) my country (2) my race (3) my family, and (4) myself.

Connie Motley is convinced that she was assigned the Meredith case because she was a woman. "Thurgood knew they treated black men a whole lot differently in Mississippi from the way they treated black women," she told Alfred Aman, the dean of the Indiana University–Bloomington School of Law, during an interview he conducted in 1988. "This is the last place in the world we wanted to hear from," she added, explaining that Marshall was worried about getting involved in Mississippi at that point, because the state seemed to be nearing an explosion, with Freedom Riders being arrested by the hundreds. By 1961, the Inc. Fund had grown to seven lawyers, and some of them were before the Supreme Court every couple of months. The office was already strained by its caseload, but Marshall knew that he had to make his last and best stand in Mississippi.

By then, Motley was well known in the Jackson federal court. She recalled that when she appeared to file her motion for Meredith, the judge, Sidney Mize, called to her from the bench, "Hi, Miz Motley!" "This was in the middle of another trial," she said. "He was very informal. When he took his recess, I told him I wanted to file my complaint against the University of Mississippi. Knowing there would be resistance, given the volatile situation in the state, he said to me, 'Why did you have to come now?' "

Motley was brisk with Meredith. She told him to get decent clothes and to shave his beard. He was a meticulous record keeper, Motley recalled. At one point, she subpoenaed his files from the university. The registrar, in an attempt to stall, said, "We didn't bring the records," whereupon Meredith said, "I have a copy of everything I sent." Motley had a vivid memory of the moment: "They were floored. They had never expected that here was this student who would have a copy of all their correspondence!" One of the many tactics that were used to keep Meredith out of the university was to threaten to arrest him for having registered to vote in Jackson, where he had gone to college, rather than in his home town, Kosciusko. Immediately, Motley flew to New Orleans, where the court of appeals judge on Meredith's case was sitting. "They are about to arrest Meredith," she told Judge John Minor Wisdom, and then suggested, "You could issue an injunction under the all-writs statute," a statute that permits a court to take whatever action is necessary to preserve its jurisdiction. Wisdom did so. Motley met Medgar Evers, the Mississippi field secretary of the N.A.A.C.P., in New Orleans and, with him, drove straight to Jackson. "We got there at five minutes to six to prevent Meredith's arrest," she recalled.

For months, the Justice Department avoided weighing in on Meredith, because the new Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy, did not want a confrontation with Governor Ross Barnett. The litigation dragged on for a year and a half; Motley made twenty-two trips to Mississippi. For Joel Motley, then in grade school at Dalton, his mother's travel was part of a great crusade. "There was no question in our house that history was being made," he told me. "One day during the Meredith trial, Burke Marshall"—an Assistant United States Attorney General—"called. I remember he told my mother that he wanted her to do X, Y, and Z. She hung up the phone on him. She told us that she was happy to have his help, but he wasn't going to tell her how to run her case." On the day when Connie Motley decided that she would file a motion in federal district court to hold Governor Barnett in contempt, she drove to the Meridian, Mississippi, courthouse with Meredith and her secretary, in Medgar Evers' car. "While we were driving," she recalled, "Meredith said to me, 'Put those papers inside the *Times*. We are being followed. We don't want them to know who you are.' There we were, frightened to death, driving to Meridian. This occurred going through a wooded area. The state police just followed us all the way. They knew it was Medgar's car, because they had been following him for years." (Within a year, of course, Evers was murdered.) "When we got to court, my secretary, in her haste, wrote 'motion' instead of 'order.' Judge Mize was presiding over the court, with Harold Cox, another judge, who was the most anti-black human being I ever met. Judge Cox looked at our document and threw it at us. He said, 'Look at this, it says "motion"!' Judge Mize put his hand on Judge Cox's hand and said, 'Judge Cox, it is all over.' Mize was saying, in effect, 'You are a federal judge. You cannot take sides.' "

A FEW weeks before the fortieth anniversary of Brown v. Board of Education, I went to Columbia to visit Jack Greenberg. Greenberg has been on sabbatical this year, finishing "Crusaders in the Courts," and I wondered whether the years he spent analyzing the Inc. Fund cases had given him a larger perspective on what he and Connie Motley and their colleagues accomplished. Greenberg, who is sixty-nine, is slightly built and appears younger than he is. I had noticed many black students on the campus; Greenberg recalled that when he entered Columbia Law School, in the nineteen-forties, there was only one black in his class and she was from the Virgin Islands. Greenberg talked about Thurgood Marshall and his legacy, and that conversation led inevitably to the subject of Clarence Thomas. Greenberg simply shook his head sadly, as if he could hardly tolerate the fact that Thomas had taken Marshall's place on the bench.

I asked Greenberg about the many celebrations that I had been told he plans to speak at for the fortieth anniversary of Brown. He said, "I'll tell you exactly," and pulled out a small calendar and read off a list: it included forums at Princeton, the College of William and Mary, and Texas Southern University, and an event that the Legal Defense Fund, which now has a staff of twenty-five lawyers, will hold in Washington on May 16th, at which the President will also speak. I told Greenberg about Connie Motley's trip to Indiana and how she was confronted by B.L.S.A. members who seemed to be trying to hold the Inc. Fund responsible for the breakdown in the black communities.

"None of these things are simple," Greenberg said. "We can't do anything about the pathologies of the ghetto: drugs, guns, single-parent households, and housing that has collapsed. But Brown has been an important factor in producing a large black middle class."

AS Judge Motley and I arrived in Washington for Thurgood Marshall's memorial service and walked through Union Station, she said, "When I first came to Washington, on that restrictive-covenants case, this was the only place Thurgood and I could eat." Motley and I had talked about some of her cases since she became a judge. In 1969, she had been vigorous in her decision to protect prisoners' right to due process in the Sostre case; in 1978, it was her ruling that allowed women reporters to enter the locker rooms of professional sports. But she said that it was her time at the Legal Defense Fund that was "lasting and significant." She later remarked that she was annoyed when the Indiana law students expected her to be an architect of social policy. "We were trying to eke out a legal victory. If you want to win a legal case, you had to win a legal argument," she said. It was a warm day in November—freakishly warm—and Judge Motley decided to take a taxi the short distance to the Court. In the taxi, she again brought up the subject of what had happened to her in Indiana. "Don't those students realize that they would not even be at Indiana if it weren't for Thurgood Marshall and the Brown decision?" she said.

I was sitting in the front seat of the taxi, whose driver happened to be black. When he heard the name Thurgood Marshall, he suddenly became attentive. He looked carefully in the rearview mirror at the Judge. When we pulled up at the Supreme Court Building, it took Judge Motley a few moments to organize her papers in her briefcase and comb her hair. I noticed a sea of gray heads moving toward the entrance of the building, and she began to tell me which lawyer had helped with each case. The unpleasant questions posed by the Indiana students were forgotten. As we got out of the car, the taxi-driver asked her, "Ma'am, did you really know Thurgood Marshall?"

"Yes," she said matter-of-factly.

"My God," he said. ♦

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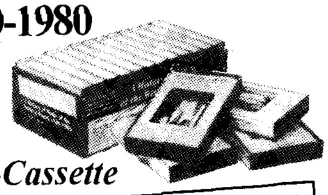

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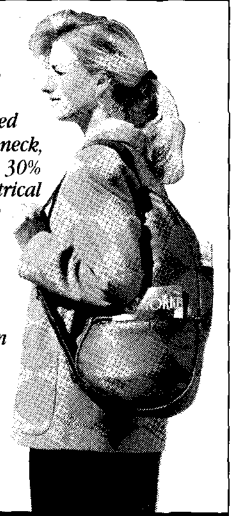

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A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE CHAIRMAN AND HIS WIFE

Even close observers of Yasir Arafat's career were shocked when he acknowledged his marriage to Suha Tawil, a Christian feminist who is half his age. But, as the Arafats ready themselves to be the First Couple of a Palestinian state, she may prove to be one of the strongest influences on him.

BY MARY ANNE WEAVER

WELL past midnight on a Wednesday morning in April of 1992, Yasir Arafat, the chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organization, entered the cockpit of a twin-engine Antonov plane that had been flying blind for nearly an hour above the Libyan desert. The pilot, a childhood friend of his, was attempting to outrun a fierce sandstorm that had enveloped the Sahara that night or to find an airfield where he could bring the plane down. "He said he had run out of options," Arafat told me several weeks ago, as we sat in his office in Tunis, the headquarters-in-exile of the P.L.O. It was again well past midnight, and my meeting with Arafat had been arranged by his wife, Suha Tawil. A striking blond woman who is less than half his age (he is sixty-four), she was sitting in an armchair next to him. "We had consumed nearly all our fuel," Arafat went on. "The engines were clogged with sand. The instruments were no longer functioning. He told me that a blind crash landing was our only chance."

Arafat returned to the tiny cabin and passed on the pilot's decision to his fifteen or so guards, who had travelled with him from Tunis to the Sudanese capital, Khartoum, where he had met briefly with a detachment of P.L.O. troops. He then slowly and meticulously changed his clothes. Taking off a navy jogging suit, he put on a crisp khaki uniform. He carefully wrapped his black-and-white kaffiyeh around his bald head and secured its long fold on the button of his right-hand breast pocket, completing a transformation he had perfected in the more than three decades since he first began wearing the bulky head scarf, which he had fashioned into the shape of a map of Palestine. Finally, he strapped on a pearl-handled pistol.

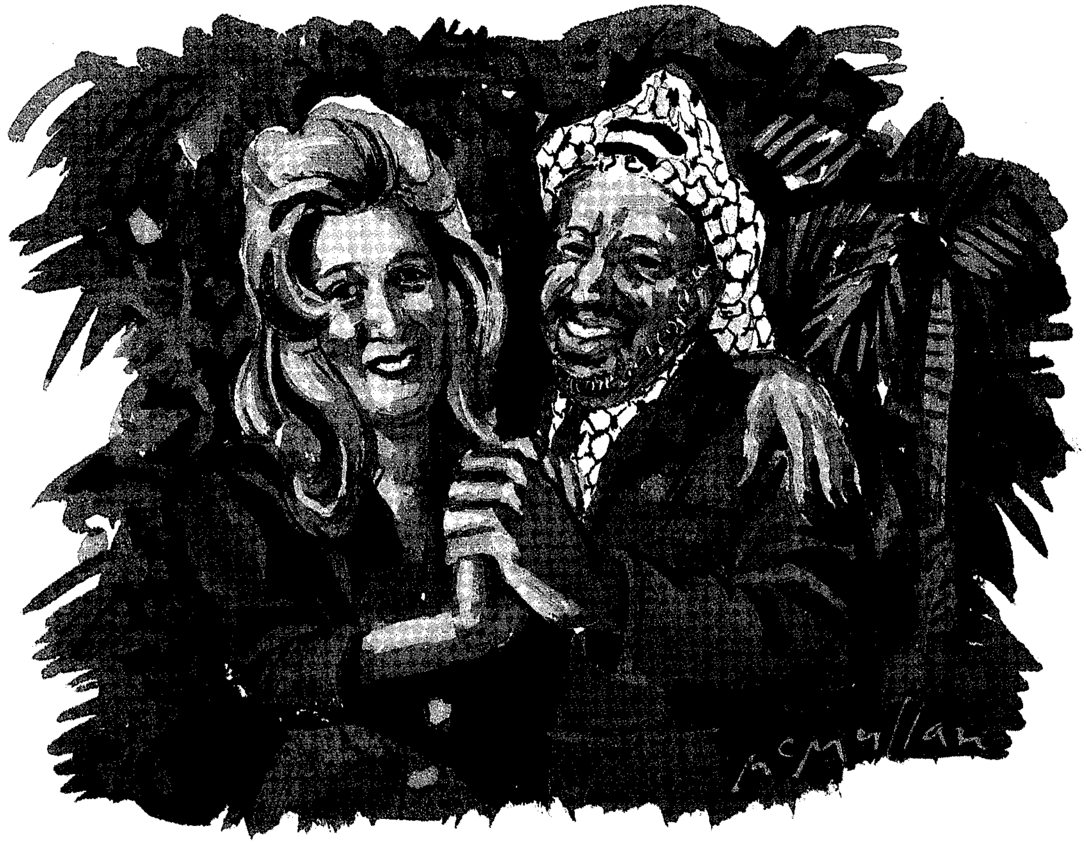
The plane began bucking and rocking as the pilot descended from thirty-two thousand feet and emptied his remaining fuel. Arafat walked to the back of the cabin, to prepare for the crash. His chief bodyguard, Fathi, nodded toward the seat nearest the cabin's rear wall, which had been wrapped in blankets, and there Arafat sat down. His guards strapped him in and piled blankets and pillows on top of him and around him, sealing him, in effect, in a makeshift cocoon. It was a survival technique that all of them, including Arafat, had learned decades before, in Beirut, but none of them had ever used. Despite a forty-year career in which the P.L.O. chairman, against the odds, has managed—so far, at least—to survive wars and rebellions, a succession of political crises, conspiracies, and attempts on his life, this was probably his most personal encounter with mortality.

"My pilot sacrificed his life for me, as his co-pilot did," Arafat told me. "Plus the flight engineer—he wasn't even a Palestinian but a Romanian, who was here training our flight officers and our engineers. They tried so hard—my God, they kept trying to find the airport at the border—but the storm was so fierce. There was no visibility—nothing. Just blackness and swirling sand. When they knew we had run out of choices, they brought the plane down at an angle at which they would take the shock up front. I remember hearing the voice of my friend, in his last radio message. It was calm and matter-of-fact. 'Our fuel is finished. We are obliged to land.' " Two minutes later, the front of Arafat's aircraft exploded as it hit the ground, and the plane broke in half.

All of us in the Tunis office were silent, waiting for Arafat to go on. This was the first time I had seen the P.L.O. chairman since December of 1979, when I met him in a Damascus hotel where he had hectored his way through a press conference, ever ready to pounce. He was then a swaggering revolutionary with a thick black mustache, and with an AK-47 slung casually over his shoulder and resting on his hip. His face was framed by his kaffiyeh, and his exceedingly small eyes were covered by exceedingly dark glasses—part of the mask, and the myth. Now there was a melancholy about him. I was astonished by the change. He seemed smaller—even smaller than his five-feet-three frame, and his eyes, unprotected by dark glasses, were red and swollen from fatigue. His pearl-handled pistol was strapped on his right hip, but his compact black machine gun now lay on the floor behind his desk. On the desk top—a vast mahogany expanse—four bottles of pills were lined up in front of him. As I watched him massaging his eyes and the back of his neck, I thought about what a friend of his, who is also one of the few surviving co-founders of his al-Fatah guerrilla movement, had said to me a few days before: "It's been thirty years. This revolution has simply gone on too long. Then we were young; now we are old."

I saw other changes in Arafat that night, as we sat in his office—a spacious one, on a quiet, tree-lined street that was cordoned off at both ends and heavily guarded, both by commandos from the Tunisian Army and by Arafat's own security men. In the past, I had encountered him only in the setting of a formal interview, in which he was surrounded by guards and aides. He had not been an easy person to talk to: he had blurted out answers—short, rhetorical, and, most often, maddeningly imprecise. Now there were no aides present, and only one guard, standing discreetly at the far end of the room. As Arafat continued talking, about the plane crash and then about his early life, he was expansive and engaging—a compelling storyteller, swivelling in his chair, at times looking directly at Suha, talking directly to her.

The P.L.O. headquarters in Tunis received word that Arafat's plane was missing from an Israeli civilian radio operator in Tel Aviv. The operator telephoned a key Arafat adviser, Bassam Abu Sharif, at the office, and although Bassam, who had once been a target of an Israeli letter bomb, was suspicious, he nevertheless began phoning around. Bassam later told me that when he was convinced that the plane was indeed missing he gambled, and telephoned the White House. He asked for former President Jimmy Carter, whom he had come to know over the years, and in a matter of minutes he was connected with Carter's Atlanta residence. He briefed Carter and then made a request that—since the United States government was officially not speaking to the P.L.O.—was highly unorthodox: "Could a U.S. satellite be directed to find the plane?" Within hours, Carter called back with the coördinates on the map.



"You can't expect Yasir Arafat to take you dancing," Suha Tawil says, "although he dances the tango beautifully."

JAMES MCMULLEN

It took fifteen hours for a search party to find Arafat and his guards in the middle of the desert: they were a hundred and ten miles from the nearest airstrip. All of Arafat's men were injured, but all had survived; the bodies of the pilot, the co-pilot, and the flight engineer were in the charred ruins of the front of the plane. Arafat was one of just three of the survivors who were able to move about, and his injuries seemed minor at the time: small fragments of glass lodged in his eyelid and cheek, and bruises and bumps on his head.

I couldn't help wondering, as I looked at Arafat, whether during those hours in the desert he was really as confident as his account might suggest. As he waited for the search party to arrive, when he wasn't administering first aid or leading his guards in prayer or shooting hyenas to prevent them from devouring his flight crew's remains, he was walking around the desert expanse, uncomfortable as it was, and climbing with some difficulty up the sand dunes and back down. He was searching—obsessively, it seemed to his guards—for a Samsonite attaché case. It may have contained the "notebook," as it is called—the accounting records of billions of dollars in P.L.O. assets. Arafat controls the money so firmly that, according to one P.L.O. official, if he had died, or if the notebook had gone up in flames, "nobody would have had any idea where the money is." In time, Arafat found his case, battered and broken, but no one I spoke to could tell me whether or not it contained the notebook. What was definitely known to be in it, however, among papers and files, was four large color photographs of his wife.

I asked Arafat how much time had elapsed between the moment when his pilot told him there were no other options and the crash.

"Twenty to twenty-five minutes."

He paused to take a phone call, and in that interval I glanced at the pictures in the office. On the walls were a photomural of the Dome of the Rock and a poster showing many of Fatah's co-founders—all dead now. The only personal touch was a framed photograph, on a bookcase near Arafat's desk, of him and Khalil al-Wazir, better known as Abu Jihad, who was for many years the legendary military commander of Fatah and was Arafat's closest friend; he was assassinated six years ago at his seaside villa in Tunis, by Israeli commandos supported by agents of Israel's external security force, Mossad.

"What was it like when the plane was going down?" I asked.

"It wasn't easy," Arafat replied. He fell silent for a moment, and then went on, "The most important thing that helped me, and kept me calm, was my religion, and my strong belief in God. Nothing really went through my mind, the way they say it does. I simply sat, and recited passages from the Koran." He added, "I remember calling out, 'Wait for me, Abu *Jihad! I'm coming to join you now!*' "

A MONTH or so after the desert crash, Arafat acknowledged, albeit with great reluctance, that for two years he had been married to Suha Tawil. Seven months later, he agreed to secret talks between P.L.O. and Israeli officials, to be held in Oslo. And nine months after that, on September 13th of last year, he, the perennial outsider—a terrorist, and a pariah to American Administrations for more than a quarter of a century—basked in the attention given him on the White House Lawn, during the ceremony in which the Palestinian and the Israeli negotiators signed the Declaration of Principles, a set of proposals for limited Palestinian self-rule. The proposals, for all the attention they got, fall painfully short of everything that Arafat and the P.L.O. had championed for so long. It was as though this always frustrating, bewildering man—part revolutionary symbol, part statesman, part thespian and charlatan—had once again reinvented himself.

BREATHING

Still bodiless:
dishevelled spring.
Invisible yet tangible,
it leaps around the corner,
hurries by, vanishes,
touches my forehead: no one there.

Spring air.
Nobody knows
how it appears and disappears.
The sun opens its eyes:
the world
has just turned twenty.

Light beats behind the blinds.
Sprouts shoots in my thoughts.
Air more than leaves,
a flutter barely green,
they turn for a moment and scatter.
Time weighs a little less.
I breathe.

—Octavio Paz

(*Translated, from the Spanish, by Eliot Weinberger.*)

During the weeks I spent in Tunis in February and March, Arafat's popularity was at its lowest ebb in years, as Palestinian intellectuals, Islamic activists, Arafat's own negotiators, and residents of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip unleashed a chorus of protest against his negotiating stance; against what they saw as his growing authoritarianism and single-mindedness; and against the accord itself, which is, in effect, a series of signposts pointing in different directions—and avoiding the infinitely tougher issues that lie ahead. Arafat was attempting in every possible way to present it as the first step toward an independent state, while the Israelis were attempting to show that *it* would evolve toward nothing more than an autonomous area within Israel.

The differences between the two sides were revealed, in almost embarrassing clarity, last Wednesday in Cairo, when Arafat initially refused to sign a set of documents—including six maps—that finally implemented the accord and set into motion Israeli withdrawal from the two incongruous, noncontiguous slivers of land chosen for Palestinian rule: Gaza, the center of an Islamic revival and revolt, and Jericho, a quiet, dusty oasis, important less as a place than as a symbol that Palestinian rule is supposed to extend swiftly to every part of the West Bank except East Jerusalem.

Even the signing itself was greeted by scant celebration among many Palestinians. Indeed, there was growing concern that the interim agreement, on which Arafat had gambled everything, will not bring the promised rewards. And in Tunis, I'm told, there is a feeling—not unlike the mood when I was there—of irresolution and drift. Many Palestinians accuse Arafat, whose political fortunes had been plummeting since the Gulf War, of committing the ultimate act of egotism by selling out their national rights. As I watched him storm off the stage during Wednesday's ceremony, I remembered something he had told me several weeks before, in response to a question I'd asked. "Yes, this *is* my most serious crisis," he said. "Because, you see, I don't know what to do next."

We were having *iftar*—the traditional evening meal with which Muslims end their daylong fast during the month of Ramadan—at a Palestinian orphanage, al-Sumud. The orphanage, situated in a sprawling stucco building on the outskirts of town, is funded by the P.L.O., and Arafat, without fanfare or announcement, is a frequent visitor. I had come to al-Sumud with Suha Tawil, whom I had met only a few nights before—a meeting that had been somewhat unusual, even by the strange standards of the P.L.O. I was in my hotel room, nearly asleep, when the telephone rang. It was just before midnight, and a male voice said softly, "Come quickly. Mme. Arafat is waiting."

"Where?" I asked.

"Downstairs. Quickly, quickly!" And he hung up.

I hastily dressed and raced to the lobby, and from there a man I had never seen before led me to the dark hotel parking lot. A car door opened, and out stepped Mrs. Arafat. Her blond hair was tousled and fell casually on the shoulders of a navy Louis Feraud suit, which had large gold buttons and a miniskirt. Under the jacket was a cheerful silk blouse of many colors; a gold pendant and a simple gold wedding band were the only jewelry she wore.

Her voice is full of energy, and now

a torrent of words spilled out: "Oh, how wonderful to meet you! I'm sorry it's so late, but, you know, we work such odd hours. You are *so* lucky you didn't come to dinner tonight"—she had dined with a foreign ambassador, and had earlier invited me, then telephoned back to say that she'd changed her mind. "It was *so* dull, I can't tell you. It's not easy being married to Yasir Arafat. He never goes *anywhere*, and I have to do all these official things. Come, come, let's get out of this dreary parking lot." With that, she jumped into the back seat of her car, where Sahar Ghosheh, the wife of a P.L.O. Executive Committee member and one of Suha's few P.L.O. friends, sat. With a screech of tires and a flashing of lights on the top of three accompanying security cars, we careered out of the parking lot and into the night.

Suha is a difficult woman to describe: her demeanor is at once that of a schoolgirl and that of a matronly protector of Arafat. Her face can change dramatically, transforming her entire look. She is the opposite of inscrutable; she could never be a sphinx. She is tall—perhaps five feet eight—with very fair skin, luminous brown eyes, and a full cascade of hair, and most often she dresses elegantly. Her hair and her eyes, together with a faint lisp when she speaks English, give her an air of naïveté. They also give her a startling resemblance to Meryl Streep. She is warm and enormously friendly, though she can be laughing one moment and scowling and ponderous the next.

The P.L.O. maintains the utmost secrecy about its leaders and their personal lives. Arafat himself has never provided anyone with a biography. Now, as the car sped along Tunis's dark streets, I tried to recall all the random musings I had heard from P.L.O. officials about his wife. Most often, they were proffered only after considerable thought, and they tended to contradict each other. Suha Tawil isn't an easy woman for her husband's entourage to come to know or understand. In a sense, she is a chameleon, as mysterious as her husband is.

She is part Sorbonne and Paris, a product of café society and an émigré life, vacations in the South of France, feminist literature, peace marches, and an abiding fascination with designer clothes. She is also part Occupied West Bank; she was a teen-age activist there, but one for whom form and manners took precedence, even when she was demonstrating against the Israeli Army, throwing bricks and stones. And she is part Yasir Arafat's Christian wife, determined and strong-willed, fighting to establish her place in his jealously guarded world, and yet she is a fatalist as well.

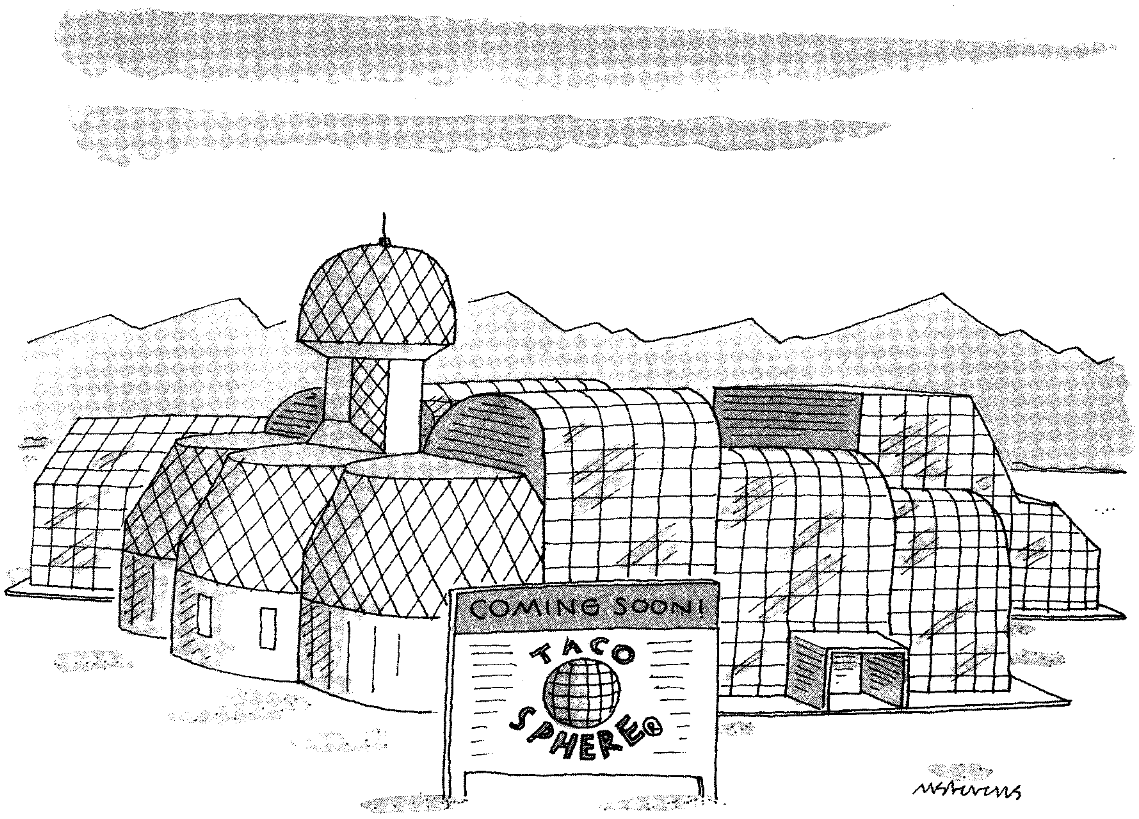
When we reached our destination, a modest two-story villa in the suburbs, we swept into the house surrounded by a tight phalanx of security men. An assortment of secretaries and aides, household staff, and more security men hurriedly assembled in the marble foyer, appearing through a number of doorways. Each had something to put forward: a file, an urgent telephone message, a news brief, a disaster, a complaint.

"Later, later," she told them, and we climbed the stairs.

In her sitting room, she ordered tea and coffee, and we chatted about my plans. Then she asked, "Do you want to see my husband?" I replied that I did. She picked up the telephone and, after a brief exchange in Arabic, she turned toward me and said, "O.K. He's waiting for us now." We didn't take time to finish our coffee, and—again surrounded by security men—we swept down the stairs, past the assembled staff, and out of the villa.

That proved to be the way that all my interviews and meetings with Arafat went. They were all arranged by Suha, and as I spent more time with them I had the sense, which was also based on everything I'd heard, that whatever she requested of him he would never refuse her.

Three days later, at the al-Sumud orphanage, I glanced across the room at the table where she sat. No men shared it; she was surrounded by children, orphanage administrators, and a visiting professor from Gaza who wore the veil. I had been invited by Arafat to sit at his table, directly across from him, and flanked by one of his aides and another visiting professor from Gaza, a man named Dr. Reyad Agha, who is the president of a university there. Our other table companions were noisy, animated children, dressed mostly in T-shirts and



jeans or jogging suits and Reeboks, and ranging in age from five to eighteen. Most of them were survivors of massacres in the Beirut refugee camps of Sabra, Shatila, and Tal al-Zaatar. Arafat told me that he had adopted twenty-six of them.

He bantered with his charges, complimenting or scolding them when he learned their grades. A ceiling fan strained overhead, and I noticed that all the curtains were drawn. Standing at attention in front of the windows, and outside the door, were heavily armed guards.

"I shall take each and every one of these children back to Palestine with me," Arafat said, with an expansive sweep of one hand. I saw that he wore no wedding band.

"Why do you come here so often?" I asked.

"I love children," he replied. "They are my weakest and my strongest point."

A large, toothless woman appeared at the table juggling platters of food: fried fish, curries and rice, vegetables heaped with chilies, and hot pita bread. Then she brought a tureen of soup, and Arafat stood up and ladled it, serving each of the guests himself.

The *iftar* conversation moved quickly, and was dominated largely by the subject of Hamas, the militant Islamic organization, which vehemently opposes the Palestinian-Israeli accord and has emerged as the key challenger of Arafat and the P.L.O. Hamas is especially strong in Gaza, whose eight hundred thousand people—nearly half of them living in squalid refugee camps—are jammed together on only a hundred and thirty-five square miles of land. Arafat listened intently as Dr. Agha talked about the new, higher level of mosque attendance in Gaza and the new level of lawlessness there, too. Although Arafat publicly dismisses Hamas's growing popularity, I had been told by several of his aides that he was deeply concerned about what it could portend: a deadly power struggle, once the Israelis withdraw, between the armed wing of his Fatah movement, the Fatah Hawks, and Hamas's Qassim Brigades, and, more generally, between Palestinian secularism and Palestinian fundamentalism.

After we finished *iftar*, we all moved to a small office just off the dining room, and Arafat sat down at a slightly unsteady desk while the rest of us assembled on an overstuffed sofa or in a scattering of armchairs. As we sipped cups of sweet, milky tea, he held a succession of private conversations with teachers and administrators from al-Sumud, signed students' scholarship forms, and, I noticed, also signed a number of checks.

"I understand you know Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman," Arafat said to me when he had finished dealing with the pile of papers on the desk.

"Yes," I said.

"What's the most interesting thing you know about him?" Arafat asked.

"He's quite close to Hamas and Sheikh Yassin," I replied, referring to the group's founder.

"That's *impossible*," Arafat said, and his entire mood changed. He became brittle, agitated, and his voice began to rise. "Sheikh Yassin hasn't been out of Gaza since 1959."

"My God, don't provoke him," Suha, who sat next to me, whispered.

"Who told you they know each other?" Arafat, who was now nearly shouting, asked me.

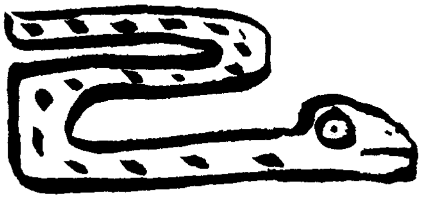
"Sheikh Omar," I said.

Turning to Dr. Agha, Arafat said something in a stream of Arabic, and the professor wrote it down. Then, calming somewhat, Arafat asked, "What else about Sheikh Omar?"

I replied that I was surprised that he had been involved in militant Islamic politics for as long as he had, and that he'd been arrested by the Egyptian authorities as early as 1954.

"That's nothing exceptional," Arafat said. "I was arrested by the Egyptians in 1954 as well. There was an assassination attempt against Nasser, and they made sweeping arrests. Everyone associated with the Ikhwan"—the fundamentalist Muslim Brotherhood—"was rounded up. It was my first arrest in Cairo, as a matter of fact."

I was somewhat startled. "I didn't know that you were a member of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood," I said.



"There's a lot you don't know about me," Arafat replied.

YASIR ARAFAT'S marriage is not unlike the other aspects of his life—strangely fascinating, contradictory, and filled with evasions and surprises. I asked him one evening, as he leafed through a pile of faxes on his desk, why he had married after so many years.

"Destiny," he replied.

When I saw Suha later that evening, she asked me what he'd said. A shadow crossed her face when I told her, and her eyes studied the room. "It wasn't destiny, it was love," she said finally. Then she perked up: "Give me the question in writing, and I'll make him answer it again."

We were sitting in what we had begun to call simply "the room": a small, vastly overheated space with white paint peeling from its walls—a room of the nineteen-fifties, a hodgepodge of sofas covered in beige velour with leopardlike spots, Formica-topped tables, and pale curtained French doors. It is the room in the house in the suburbs where Suha Tawil works and where she entertains, where she talks on the telephone and where she watches TV, where she was married, and where we feared, one afternoon, that her secretary might give birth. It is the room where Suha Tawil receives visiting dignitaries and V.I.P.s: the wife of the Tunisian President, papal envoys, ministers from the Élysée. Since her marriage, her world has shrunk to a space of twenty by twenty feet.

"I *inherited* all this with my marriage—can you believe it?" she asked, encompassing the room with a sweep of her hand. "He won't let me change a thing—not one tiny thing. He hates anything that he considers luxurious." Suha has added the *only* personal touches in the room: a large number of photographs, mainly of herself and Arafat, and Madonnas and icons of St. George, which, as in all the rooms in the Arafats' second-floor living area, share space on the walls with inscriptions from the Koran.

The villa, which has Moorish tiles and, for security reasons, is known only as No. 39, is on a quiet street in a residential neighborhood. (As with Arafat's office building, the street outside the villa is guarded at both ends, although somewhat less heavily.) The villa was

Arafat's political headquarters and primary residence from the time he arrived in Tunis—in 1982, after he and the P.L.O. were driven out of Beirut—until his marriage. Now it is Suha's primary residence, and Arafat has moved both his headquarters and *his* primary residence to the center of town. But the room and the villa still possess the austere, almost monastic air of a bachelor's house.

"The first thing I said when I moved in was 'Out!' " Suha said. "Out with the machine guns, out with the Sten guns. Can you imagine? They were all over the place. They used to bring them here to clean them, oil them, change the ammunition every night. There were machine guns all over: in the hallway, in the stairway, in *my* sitting room. I told my husband, 'They go, or I go.' This place was like a military base."

Much to Arafat's bewilderment, she also banned from the ground floor the cigarette-smoking, Kalashnikov-toting security men who are a fixture lolling about in all P.L.O. offices and homes. Her guards—whom she personally chose from Arafat's entourage—were provided with a strict dress code and, depending upon the occasion, are now often turned out in smart sports jackets and ties. Their weapons are concealed under their jackets, and smoking is now permitted only in the visitors' waiting room.

Suha Tawil grew up in a world whose underpinnings were West Bank establishment: vaguely feudal and bourgeois, and distinctly affluent. She was born in Jerusalem in July of 1963, the fourth of five children of Daoud Tawil, a prominent banker and financier, and his much younger wife, Raymonda Hawa Tawil, the daughter of a landed family from Acre, in what is now northern Israel. Suha spent her childhood in Ramallah and Nablus, which the Israeli Army occupied when she was four. She was educated by French nuns, and her mother was hostess to literary and, later, political soirées, which were frequently attended by Israeli doves—a coming together of Palestinians and Israelis that was considered quite bold at the time. But Raymonda, whose own mother was an early member of the Palestinian resistance, is a woman who thrives by sheer force of will: a Palestinian activist who openly supported Arab-Israeli coexistence when it was considered traitor-

ous; a feminist who confronted Arab male chauvinism and patriarchy on the streets and in her home.

She founded the Palestinian Press Service, which covered the struggle against Israeli occupation of the West Bank—the only agency of its kind—and was also a de-facto spokeswoman for the P.L.O., and often travelled to its chairman's heavily fortified villas, in Baghdad, Tunis, and Beirut. She and Arafat became close, and saw each other intermittently for more than twenty years.

Suha first heard the name Yasir Arafat when she was four, and she and her brother and her sisters, along with their governess, cowered in the basement of their Nablus house while Israeli troops combed the street looking for the Fatah leader. When she was ten, she demonstrated against the Israelis for the first time, dressed in a neatly starched school uniform, carrying a picture of Arafat in one hand and, in the other, a rock. And when she was thirteen, and was a student at the Rosary school in Jerusalem, she and the rest of the family shared Raymonda's house arrest, which was the result of her resistance activities, for four months. Later, Raymonda was briefly jailed.

One evening over dinner, I asked Suha what house arrest had been like. "Hmm," she said, and smiled. "For me, it was wonderful. It was the only time that my mother was at home—she had always been out demonstrating, striking, working. But, for poor Mom, she couldn't even go into the garden. I remember the Israeli military governor of Ramallah telling her, 'You are not permitted to see the sun.' " After a pause, she went on, "If I were not the daughter of Raymonda Tawil, I don't think I could ever have married Yasir Arafat. She pushed us all the time—pushed us not to be passive. When we were very, very young, she made us take foreign journalists around and show them what was going on. I gave my first press interview when I was twelve. So, you see, politics and resistance are in my blood."

In the fall of 1981, Suha left the West Bank for Paris and the Sorbonne, and in 1986 she received a double master-of-arts degree, in political science and linguistics. (She did her thesis on "The Image of the Arabs in the American Mass Media," and is now at work on her Ph.D.) Her years in Paris proved to be the most carefree of her life. She immersed herself in the cinema, the theatre, the opera, and the ballet; she read de Beauvoir and Sartre; marched for the African National Congress and against Chile's Pinochet. Through her father, she was well connected to the world of Paris banking and high finance, and she moved through it with ease. She spent her summers in Cannes and Nice. And although from time to time she dabbled in P.L.O. politics, her activities were mild, consisting largely of transmitting messages between her mother and Arafat.

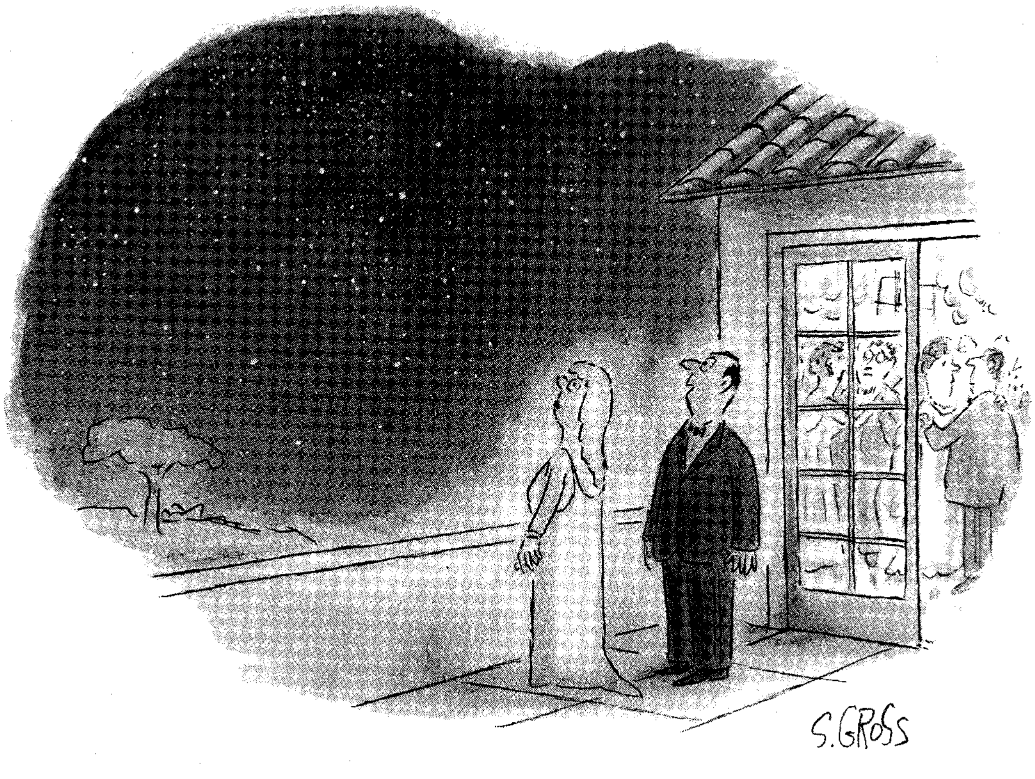
In 1984, Raymonda, who had received a number of anonymous threatening telephone calls and notes—she presumes from both the Israelis, for her P.L.O. activities, and local Palestinian extremists, for her continuing contacts with Israeli peace activists—looked out her bedroom window one evening and saw her car, at the far end of her garden, get blown up by a bomb.

"I simply couldn't take it anymore," she told me when I met her in Washington recently. "I swore, after being driven out of my home in Palestine, that I would never leave the West Bank. But my nerves were shattered. I telephoned Arafat, and he told me I had to leave."

An elegant woman with blond hair, very blue eyes, and an easy smile, Raymonda is now in her mid-fifties and, like her daughter, favors silk blouses and French couture suits. "When I saw that bomb, it all came back to me," she went on. "My childhood, my children's childhood, my mother's childhood. Every time you lose something, it's a challenge, and you want to begin again. But that bomb . . . I knew it was a political message. I no longer had a choice."

Once again, Raymonda closed down her home. In the winter of 1984, she and Daoud joined Suha in Paris, to begin another exile. Raymonda now divides her time between Paris and Washington, where she has established a branch of her press service, and is at work on her memoirs.

In the summer of 1985, during a family holiday in Amman, Raymonda took Suha and her other daughters to meet Arafat. "It was a meeting, just a normal meeting," Suha recalls. "I was still a university student, and thought I was terribly worldly and grownup. But I remember how excited I was



"I sell space."

just at the thought—the thought of meeting the leader. I had demonstrated for him so often, carried his picture, and been teargassed and shot at."

I asked if she was disappointed by the meeting.

"No," she said.

Suha and Arafat met again in 1987, and began to meet frequently in 1988, when she followed him to Baghdad and Yemen, Tunis and Algiers, ferrying messages from Raymonda that included secret reports on the *intifada*, the popular uprising in the Occupied Territories, which had begun the previous year. But their most important meeting came in 1989, when Arafat made an official visit to France, and her brother-in-law, Ibrahim Souss, who was the P.L.O. representative in Paris, put her in charge of Arafat's schedule and protocol.

"That was it," Suha told me one evening as we sipped coffee in the room. "There were little signs before: he kept calling me on the phone, and he planted the seed, saying 'If I were younger, I would have married you.' There was a chemistry between us, it was clear. And in Paris everything came together." She snapped her fingers. "Just like that."

Before leaving Paris, Arafat asked Suha to come to Tunis and join his staff, as an economic assistant and, in effect, his *chef de cabinet*. She hesitated, but only for a moment. "If I do," she told him, "I'll never be allowed to go back to the West Bank and Palestine."

"Yes, you will," he responded. "We'll go together. I promise you that."

In October of 1989, with twenty-five boxes of books and five trunks of clothes, Suha left Paris. Nine months later, on her twenty-seventh birthday, she and Arafat were secretly married, in the room, with only two witnesses and a registrar present. The ceremony was not officially registered until two years later.

I asked Suha to tell me about the courtship.

"I have," she replied.

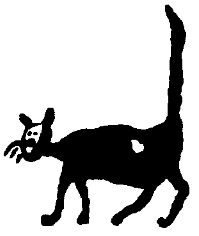
"But you only told me you were a courier," I said.

"That *was* the courtship," she explained. "It began there. We began talking, talking, talking. This is a man whose best friends have been assassinated, one by one, and who has been put on a pedestal by everyone. People forgot that Yasir Arafat is human—he's not a machine. But nobody talked to him normally anymore."

"But has he ever taken you out for dinner? For a walk on the beach? Dancing?" I asked.

"Are you crazy?" she said. "You can't expect Yasir Arafat to take you dancing, although he dances the tango beautifully." She thought for a moment, and then said, "We did walk around the gardens of his Baghdad villa—once. But we were inside the walls. Me, Abu Ammar"—Arafat's nom de guerre—"and fifty bodyguards."

A few days earlier, when I was interviewing Arafat, asking him about a subject that he seemed disinclined to discuss, he had scowled at me over his desk and said, "Don't squeeze me. I'm a Leo and I don't like to be boxed in." That reminded me that on several occasions I'd heard Suha and Arafat sprinkle their conversation with references to astrology and fate. And before I left the villa that evening Suha—a Cancer—told me what it is like when a Cancer marries a Leo. She had become reflective, and tilted her head as she rested her chin on her hand. Then she said, "A Leo is very meticulous, very authoritarian, and has to be in control," she said. "A Cancer is sensitive, susceptible, and needs a protector, or else will live under a shell. The two signs go together: a Cancer is very affectionate, and a Leo needs affection, even though he won't admit it, and considers it a weakness, a character flaw. But a Cancer gives and gives and gives. And, yes, a Leo-Cancer marriage can work—with concessions from the Cancer." She paused, and smiled. "But, of course," she added, "I am talking only about the stars."



EARLY each morning—at one or two o'clock—Suha is whisked through Tunis's streets to meet Arafat, whom she may not have seen since breakfast the morning before. Until the last minute, she often doesn't know precisely where she will be going. Sometimes she sleeps at his primary residence; at other times he comes to hers; and at still other times they meet in one or another of a number of P.L.O. safe houses in the suburbs. Even now, Arafat is a captive of the habits he fashioned as a guerrilla leader living underground: his most productive working hours are around midnight; he rarely sleeps in the same place more than two or three consecutive nights, and he almost never goes to sleep until dawn is about to break—a pattern he established in April of 1973 in Beirut, after three of his top aides were assassinated by Israelis shortly after midnight, as they slept in their beds. Arafat himself estimates that he has survived about forty assassination attempts.

Early one morning, as Suha and I sped along Tunis's empty boulevards toward my hotel, where she was dropping me before meeting Arafat, I asked her what the single greatest difficulty was in being married to him.

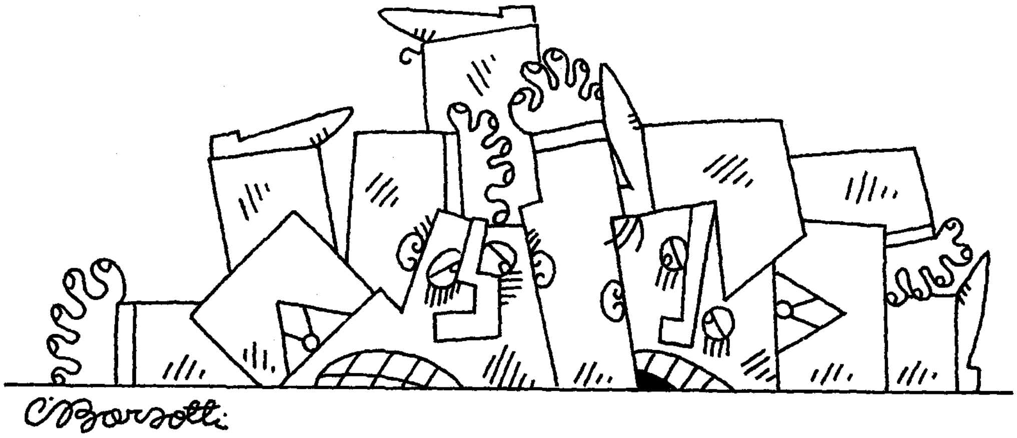
"This," she said. I glanced out the window from the curtained back seat of her car, and in front of us and on either side were the security cars with flashing lights, filled with some fifteen bodyguards. "This security. It drives me crazy, and so does everything that springs from it. I live in the office; I sleep in the office. We don't live as a *normal* couple does. If I want to say something to my husband, I'm obliged to wait until four o'clock in the morning—even to tell him small, personal things. I have to postpone my life, and put everything on hold—a problem, an anger, a joy. Anything that a woman would normally tell her husband, I am obliged to wait. He's used to being available to his entourage twenty-four hours a day, and he still *is*. You've seen it. Other than adding the presence of a woman, I really haven't changed his life at all. He is still very much Yasir Arafat."

"What do you miss most from your earlier life?" I asked.

"Freedom, being anonymous," she said. "I like liberty, the liberty to move around: walking in the streets of Paris, window-shopping, going to a bookstore and buying a book, just sitting in a café. When I was last in Paris, a few months ago, with my sisters, they asked French security if I could just walk, walk in the Place Victor-Hugo. I sometimes have the strange sense that I've left twenty-five years of my life behind. Everything is so different now. Sometimes you're obliged not to be yourself. My husband's advisers keep telling me that I've got to be more serious, less spontaneous. Of course, I don't heed their advice. Yet, at the same time, I know that through this marriage I've given up a large part of myself."

"Why did you marry Arafat?" I asked.

"The simple truth is that I really do love him—there's no logic to it. Other-



"I feel your pain."

• •

wise, I would *never* live like this. He really is gallant and gracious, terribly funny, and very much an intellectual. I've lived in Europe for nearly ten years, and I know men—I know how they treat women—and Yasir Arafat is head and shoulders above any other man I've known. And what were my choices? I could have married a thirty-year-old man who is banal and boring, and who would have got on my nerves; or I could marry Yasir Arafat, who is twice my age, and who is exhilarating, and watch history being made."

THAT history, in a sense, began in the late nineteen-fifties, when a twenty-eight-year-old engineer named Muhammad Abdel Raouf Arafat al-Qudwa al-Husseini—Arafat's real name—arrived in the desert sheikhdom of Kuwait. Up to then, he had lived nearly all his life in Cairo, where he was born, in August of 1929, to a Palestinian mother, a descendant of a prominent Jerusalem family, the Abu Saouds, and a thrice-married Egyptian-Palestinian father, a merchant from Gaza of much less distinguished pedigree. (Arafat is so evasive about his background that he normally refuses to say where he was born, and, when he has, he has said, variously, Gaza or Jerusalem.) At the age of nineteen, he entered Fuad I (now Cairo) University to study engineering, and embraced all that was fashionable at the time—riding, the tango, Anglophobia, and tea sandwiches with the crusts cut off. It was there that he gained the nickname Yasir, which means "easygoing" or "carefree." But the name, and his outward demeanor, masked the steely side of an extremely status-conscious activist who was driven by the anticolonial politics of the time.

He moved deftly through the worlds of Islamic activism, pan-Arabism, and Palestinian nationalism, holding each political conviction with equal force, and immersing himself totally in the cause, whether it was Egyptian or Palestinian. For, unlike most of his Palestinian friends and classmates at the university, Arafat not only was not born in Palestine but had lived there for only four years—from the age of four to the age of eight, after his mother died and he was sent to his maternal uncle in Jerusalem. And, unlike the others, who fled from British-mandated Palestine in 1948, when the State of Israel was born, Arafat's immediate family had left Palestine twenty-one years earlier.

By 1957, the year after his graduation, Arafat had become restless and bored, and, in part because he was under increasingly close surveillance for his activities with the Muslim Brotherhood, he left Cairo for Kuwait. There he began to take steps toward realizing his dream of uniting all Palestinians in a struggle for a homeland and then, in any manner possible, securing that homeland. In 1958, along with Abu Jihad and four other close friends, most of whom were fellow-activists from his university days, Arafat founded Fatah, the first Palestinian resistance group. It later became the most powerful faction in the P.L.O., an umbrella organization of disparate groups.

Friends from his years in Kuwait have described him, variously, as a jet-set playboy, who vacationed in the South of France and was given to driving flashy cars at excessive speed, and as an ascetic, who neither drank nor smoked, was awkward in the company of women, and found socializing difficult. But everyone I spoke to agreed that Arafat was consistent in pursuing his dream.

Arafat and his friends remained in Kuwait until the end of 1964, by day working in their professions (Arafat set up his own contracting firm, and was "a very wealthy man," he told me, well on his way to becoming a millionaire), and by night beginning an underground: recruiting, organizing, publishing a magazine. Their first cross-border raid, from Jordan into Israel, occurred in January of 1965. Although it was a disaster, it was nevertheless a challenge not only to the Israelis but also to the Arab regimes.

Arafat was now in a state of perpetual motion, going from Jordan to Damascus to Beirut, and he had re-created himself. He adopted the nom de guerre Abu Ammar, which was the name of a legendary Muslim warrior. (Among his closest associates, he was known as al-Khityar, meaning the "old man"—a sobriquet he likes, because it gives him a paternal air.) He discarded his double-breasted suits in favor of military fatigues. He began wearing the kaffiyeh and an automatic rifle. And he stopped shaving, or so he claims. (One evening, when I used his Tunis bathroom, I discovered that he does own both a razor and a pair of trimming shears.)

Arafat appears to have relished the stagecraft of his new life, and after the June, 1967, war, in which the West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem—the remaining third of the former British mandate of Palestine—were lost, he travelled in and out of the Occupied Territories to set up resistance cells, using a portfolio of disguises and pseudonyms: at one time, Dr. Muhammad; at another, Dr. Abou; and sometimes a peasant, a teacher, a sheikh, or a priest. But his hopes for an uprising in the Occupied Territories never materialized, and in 1968 he left for Jordan. He never again returned to the land of Palestine.

That year, however, proved to be a watershed. For the first time, Arafat's *fedayeen*—a small, ill-armed guerrilla band that had been making raids into Israel from a Jordanian refugee camp in a place called Karameh—stood their ground, backed by Jordanian soldiers, when an overwhelming Israeli force attacked. The following year, Arafat became chairman of the P.L.O.

In Jordan, Fatah and the P.L.O. created a state within a state, openly advertising their ambition to replace the Hashemite kingdom—and King Hussein—with a revolutionary order of their own. Then, in September of 1970, the King unleashed his Bedouin legions against them and, eventually, drove them out.

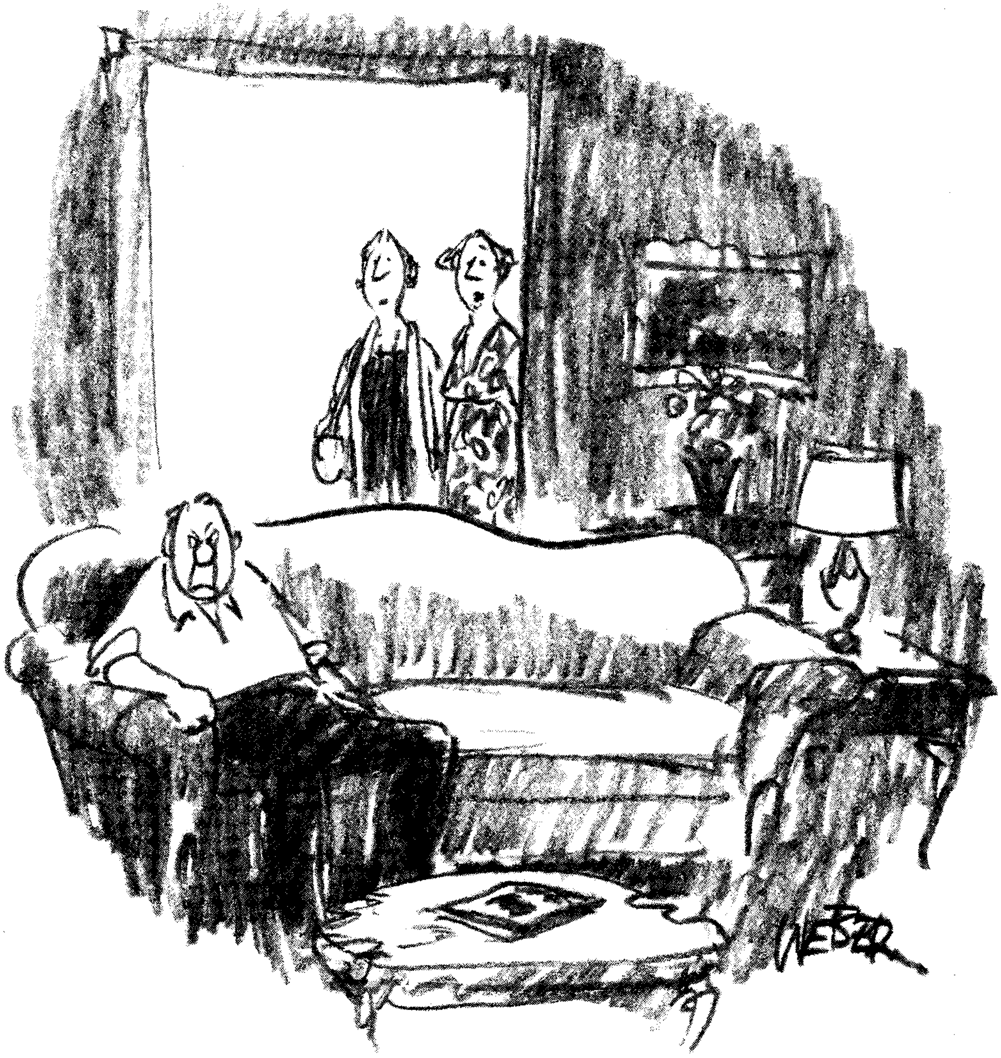
During the nineteen-seventies, the P.L.O. rapidly became one of the international left's most romantic organizations; when it began sponsoring hijackings and assassinations, it also became one of the most dangerous. There is no question that Arafat himself approved numerous acts of terrorism in the early nineteen-seventies—one of the most notorious of which may be the 1973 murder in Khartoum of the American Ambassador to Sudan and two other Western diplomats. Responsibility was claimed by a P.L.O. front known as Black September, whose purpose was to conduct revenge attacks against King Hussein, Israel, and other groups that had harmed the Palestinian cause. (Black September was at the time the most feared terrorist organization in the world, because of the murder of eleven Israeli athletes at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich.) The strong international reaction to the Khartoum incident made Arafat reconsider the role of terrorist acts in the struggle, and by 1974 Black September was no longer active. Nonetheless, the P.L.O. continued to follow the dictum Arafat had laid down in 1970: "There can be no compromises or mediation. . . . Peace for us means Israel's destruction, and nothing else."

In the seventies, the P.L.O. made its home in Lebanon, where Arafat built an autonomous power base, far stronger than the one he'd had in Amman. His militias policed Beirut and provided security for the United States Embassy; ruled parts of the south; and became increasingly involved in the Lebanese civil war. But in June of 1982, the Israelis invaded Lebanon and, after a three-month siege of Beirut, Arafat and his troops, under an agreement brokered by the United States, went into exile again. Each successive exile took them farther away from home.

It was the United States that, in August, chose Tunis as the new headquarters for the P.L.O., and its leadership reluctantly agreed that its heavily armed soldiers—some fifteen thousand or so—would be scattered through eight Arab countries on two continents. Not long after, a mini civil war—aided and abetted by Syrian President Hafez al-Assad, a longtime foe of Arafat's—broke out between rebel and loyalist factions of Fatah which had remained in Lebanon. Arafat slipped back into the country but was unable to reconcile his fratricidal men. He eventually returned to Tunis under a safe passage arranged by the Europeans—and by the United States.

By now, Arafat had completely changed course. He, more than any other Palestinian leader, was responsible for moving the P.L.O. away from violence; and, in November of 1988, following long negotiations that provoked much dissent, Arafat—demonstrating his genius for holding together so many diverse Palestinian groups—announced that the P.L.O. had renounced terrorism and recognized Israel's right to exist. That was the beginning of the process that culminated in the signing of the autonomy accord in Cairo last week, and that may win Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin this year's Nobel Peace Prize. When I asked Raymonda Tawil if Arafat had always wanted to be a moderate, she said, "Was Ben-Gurion a moderate? Arafat was *our* Ben-Gurion." (Arafat himself refuses to discuss the issue of terrorism in interviews.)

Perhaps more than anything else,



"The only time Ralph was ever really happy was when he was on jury duty."

Arafat's keen sense of the need to negotiate was caused by the parallel loss of support for the P.L.O. The *intifada* had made it clear that Arafat no longer enjoyed universal support within the Occupied Territories, and his wholehearted embrace of Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War cost him dearly. Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states cut off their support, and P.L.O. revenues plummeted from half a billion dollars to little more than thirty million dollars a year.

"Has it all been worth it?" I asked Arafat as we sat in his office one night.

"Yes, it has," he said.

"But why did you do it? Why did you give up the life of a millionaire in Kuwait to live in mountains and caves?"

"No personal questions," he admonished me—a stricture he frequently imposes during interviews.

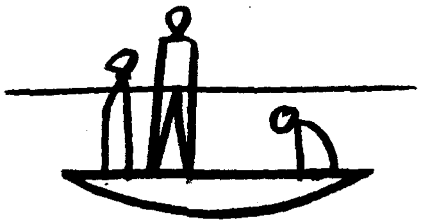
Suha, who was sitting at his side, burst into a stream of Arabic. Arafat shrugged, and then turned toward me and said, "It's hard for me to say how I look at myself, or what my most vivid memories are. Of course, there was the disaster of 1948. Ask any Palestinian my age, or older or younger. We all have the same feeling: we watched helplessly as Palestine was erased from the map."

"Was there one turning point in your life?" I asked.

He fell silent, as if he were considering whether or not to go on. Then he said, "When I was a very small boy—I can't forget—British soldiers broke into our house." This was during the Arab revolt against the British, from 1936 to 1939. "It was after midnight, and they smashed everything in sight. They arrested and beat my uncle and other relatives. We were living during that period in the big house owned by my mother's family in Jerusalem. I cannot forget it."

IN talking to Arafat about his life, one senses that his mastery of survival is due to the fact that he holds his cards famously close to his chest and that, like many revolutionary leaders, whose survival depends upon personal persuasion and political craft, he always knows precisely which image to project. One of his longtime aides told me that for him the most extraordinary thing about Arafat was that "when you went into a room with him one-on-one, there was never any question—Arafat always won." Yet, in so doing, he offers only a glimpse of himself, a fleeting sketch: projecting charm and guilelessness one moment, humility and ruthlessness the next. It appears that one of his few consistencies is that of being a formidable tactician and pragmatist who has always allowed himself an avenue of escape. He is so unpredictable that he continues to mystify even his closest aides by charting one course of action and then, abruptly, changing his mind. His marriage and the legitimatization of it are just one of his many anomalies.

For fifteen months, neither Suha nor Arafat told anyone of the marriage, and gossip was rife. Then, in October of 1991, during the Madrid peace talks, Raymonda Tawil—whose relationship with her daughter was becoming increasingly strained as a result of her persistent inquiries about Suha's status in Arafat's life—arrived in Tunis and confronted Arafat. By all accounts, it was a stormy meeting that lasted well into the night, to the incredulity of Arafat's advisers and staff. Never had they clustered so intently outside his office door. Arafat finally relented, and told Raymonda that he and Suha were married. Raymonda left. She returned to Paris and waited for an official announcement to be made. It never was, so in early 1992 Suha's family leaked word of the marriage to the Israeli press. Suha maintains—not altogether convincingly—that the proper moment for an announcement or for festivities never arrived, because the Middle East was in turmoil over the *intifada* and the Gulf War. She also says that Arafat became "the prisoner of a quote" that he had given to Oriana Fallaci some twenty years before: he told her that he had remained a bachelor because he was married to a woman called Palestine. In fact, this is not Arafat's first marriage, according to aides. They say that he was married and divorced once before—and perhaps twice—and that they kept his secret to preserve his carefully crafted image. I raised the subject with Suha one night. Her voice was steady, perhaps too controlled, and she no longer smiled. "I asked him about it," she said, "and he swore that it wasn't true."



Some of Suha's critics, and she has many within the P.L.O. and within the Palestinian community—those who resent her youth, her designer clothes, her Christianity, her feminism, and her perceived influence on Arafat—say that what most unsettled them was the boldness with which she dealt with the subject of the marriage, at a time when her husband had chosen not to speak of it. "I was never welcomed by the P.L.O. leadership," Suha says. "I had to have the courage to impose myself on it."

The degree of suspicion with which she is regarded by some of Arafat's top aides is perhaps best reflected by a threat made by Mahmoud Abbas, a key negotiator during the Oslo talks, to boycott the signing ceremony on the White House lawn if she attended. Arafat was outraged, yet he ultimately acquiesced, and Suha agreed to stay away. (She also stayed away from the Cairo ceremony last week.) But no sooner had her husband and his entourage departed for Washington than she was on the phone to the Paris bureau of CNN. Two days later, as the P.L.O. delegation, including Abbas, sat in Arafat's suite at the Westin Hotel waiting to be driven to the White House, Arafat began flicking through the channels on his television set, and, much to his astonishment, there was his wife. Over the next eight hours, CNN continued to cut to her live, as she watched the signing and explained its significance. She received far more attention than any wife who was actually there.

One morning in early March, a week or so after the Hebron massacre, which had prompted Arafat to suspend the Palestinian-Israeli autonomy talks, I sat with Suha while she received emissaries who were attempting to mediate a resumption of the talks. She listened to them intently, occasionally taking notes—something she had also done during the meetings that preceded the Oslo talks (only five Palestinians besides Arafat had known of those negotiations; one of them was his wife) and during the preparatory meetings for the signing on the White House lawn.

Over the past months, many observers have wondered whether Arafat would abandon the peace process, and perhaps Suha was one of the very few who knew. For, as her husband became increasingly isolated, as more of his top aides resigned—some because of his support of Saddam Hussein during the Gulf War; others because of the Oslo accord; and still others because of his seeming unwillingness to demand preconditions from the Israelis, including the dismantling of the West Bank settlements, before returning to the talks—Suha's influence on him was widely perceived to have grown. In fact, I couldn't help but wonder, with no successor in sight, whether Arafat, who, according to his aides, was becoming increasingly erratic and secretive, might be grooming Suha as a potential heir. It was the only question I asked her over several weeks that she adamantly, and repeatedly, refused to address.

As we talked about the peace process later that day over lunch, she said, "He simply cannot walk away from it now—it's gone too far. And, if we stop this process now, there will be massacre after massacre, just like Bosnia. But, if we go ahead, then we will get the economic prize"—foreign investment for Gaza and the West Bank—"and the political prize will follow that. We're a tiny country, and we have no choice. We must coexist with the Israelis, and we can learn a lot from them: about agriculture, economic development, women's rights. I grew up in a house where Israelis were coming and going all the time. So, you see, for me making peace with them is not at all strange."

I was struck by what a potential asset Suha could be to Arafat if they make the final journey out of exile, into Gaza and Jericho. She had lived under Israeli occupation, and he had not; her family were refugees, and his were not; she was part of the West Bank establishment, and he had never lived there, and had visited only infrequently, twenty-six years ago.

A maid entered the room carrying a tea service and an assortment of sweets. As we ate and drank, I told Suha that I had read an interview she had given five months earlier in which she said that you cannot live with Yasir Arafat, you can only live in his shadow.

"Yes," she interrupted, "but that was before. Now I say, 'You cannot live in the shadow of Yasir Arafat or you will be erased.' I'm absolutely determined to make my own life, and to become one of the most visible, and one of the most active, First Ladies in the Middle East. There are things in which I believe strongly, and, when we return to Palestine, I am determined to see them through."

"Such as?"

"Health care, decent hospitals, equal rights for women. And I have told my husband that if he denies women equality, I will be in the vanguard of women on the streets, protesting outside his office in the new Palestinian state. I also feel very strongly that polygamy must be banned. My husband says that it is justified in the Koran, but he is simply wrong. I have told him, again and again that I will not tolerate legitimate mistresses in Palestine, and for me that is what polygamy is. But I am not confronting him on religious grounds. I am challenging him on social and economic grounds."

"How does he respond?" I asked.

"It's a problem for him," she replied. A substantial number of P.L.O. fighters are polygamous.

She excused herself frequently in the course of our conversation to take telephone calls from abroad, and during one of her absences I glanced at the pictures on a nearby tabletop of Suha and Arafat with Pope John Paul II, and at the icons and Madonnas on the wall. Suha converted to Islam after her marriage—for "reasons of state," she says—but she is still a practicing Christian, and there is little doubt that the hostility of Islamic activists toward her marriage to Arafat played a role in his decision that she must convert.

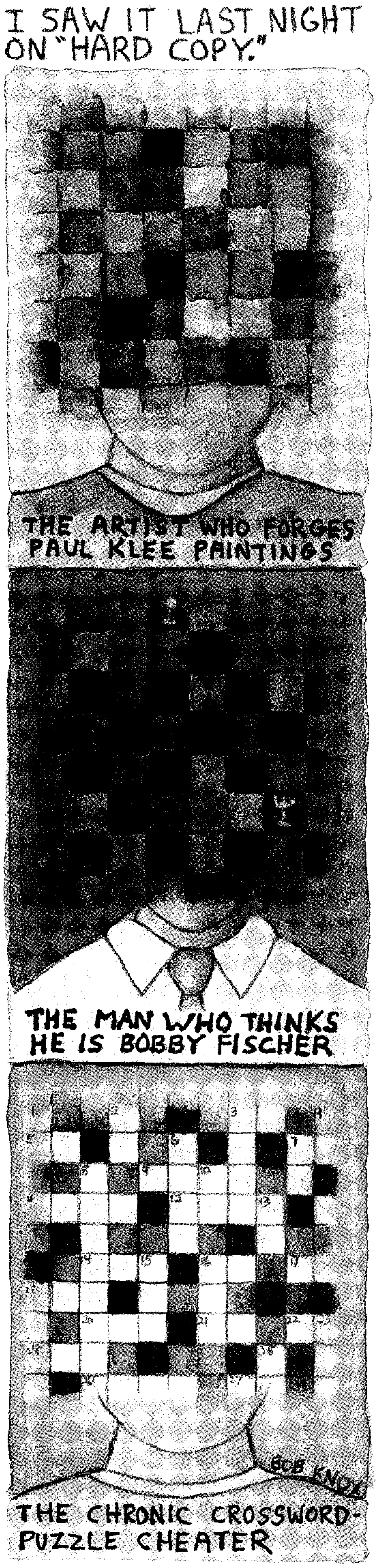
So when she returned I asked her how she was going to deal with the problems posed by the Hamas militants.

"I am not going to challenge them, or provoke them," she said. "Religious extremism, wherever it is—whether here in the Middle East, in Germany or France—is an outgrowth of frustration. And if we can really make Gaza boom—when people see hotels on the beaches, and tourists coming in, then I'm convinced that fundamentalism will have far less appeal."

"When you go to Gaza, will you veil?" I asked.

"Absolutely not."

In late May of 1992, nearly two months after the crash of Arafat's plane, he began complaining of severe headaches and of occasional numbness in his


I SAW IT LAST NIGHT ON "HARD COPY."
THE ARTIST WHO FORGES PAUL KLEE PAINTINGS
THE MAN WHO THINKS HE IS BOBBY FISCHER
BOB KNOX
THE CHRONIC CROSSWORD-PUZZLE CHEATER

arms. Suha insisted that he seek medical advice, and he flew to Jordan, where King Hussein had made arrangements with his own medical specialists. Within hours of Arafat's arrival, emergency surgery was performed to remove a blood clot and excessive fluid that had collected near his brain. While in the hospital, Arafat suffered a stroke.

I asked Suha, who had flown immediately to Amman, if this had been her most serious personal crisis since she had married Arafat.

She thought for a moment, and then said, "It was the worst period of my marriage, yet, in a strange way, after I knew he would recover, it was also the happiest. We spent one month together in Jordan, as he convalesced, sleeping in the same house every night, being together twenty-four hours a day, without his entourage." She paused and looked out the window, beyond the guards, and then turned back toward me. "The plane crash, the stroke were attempts on his life as serious as any potential assassin he's faced."

"Do you fear an assassination attempt?" I asked.

After a moment, she replied, "His life is under constant threat, but he's prepared me for the day, if it comes. He often says that you have to be a believer, that nobody takes more than is written in his destiny, and that when death comes it will come whether you are hidden in a castle, in a villa, or walking down the street."

HAMMAM LIF is a sleepy village of a few hundred people, open fields, and dust, set on a peninsula near the sea about a thirty-minute drive from the outskirts of Tunis—and sixteen hundred miles from Palestine. It is Arafat's custom on the first day of Id, the feast that ends the holy month of Ramadan, to begin his day there, leading morning prayers at a memorial service for P.L.O. officials who have been assassinated over the years. As I joined him, along with perhaps two hundred others, in the village's tiny cemetery on a bare hillside, where some fifty P.L.O. officials are buried, and listened while he read out the names, and as I sat with him at his military headquarters later in the day while he received a continuing line of men who had come to pay their holiday respects, my most vivid impression was of the faces. Some were old and gnarled, and framed by prayer caps; some were the scarred faces of fighters; others were those of recent university graduates; and still others of children, wearing American baseball caps. "It's been four generations," Arafat said.

Arafat has always been eloquent about the effects of statelessness on the Palestinians generally. So one night in his office, when I asked about its effect on him personally, he paused and said, "It means that you have no identity, no home, no place to go. I'll tell you a story. When I was in Beirut, a friend of mine died in New York. His wife contacted me and asked, 'Where do I bury him?' Four days I was searching for a cemetery and I found a church on the green line"—which separated Christian East Beirut from the Muslim sector in the West. "This was during the civil confrontation. And I buried him there, under heavy shelling. We're forced to ask ourselves, 'Where to work? Where to live? Where to study? Where to be buried?' " He added, "It's cyclical: it begins from the day that you are born, and lasts until the day that you die. You are born with nothing—no passport, no address—and then you have no place to be buried when you die."

Among the questions now being asked by both Palestinians and foreign diplomats, the key question is whether Arafat, who has refashioned himself so many times before, can do it once again, and make the transition from guerrilla leader to chief of state. In a sense, all the other questions spring from this. Are those qualities which allowed him to survive for four decades qualities necessary to govern, even if, initially, in a limited way? Will he permit his authoritarianism to yield to collective leadership? Will he hold elections and respect democracy? And will he take advantage of the vast pool of talent available to him, both inside and outside the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, or will he rely only on the P.L.O. leadership, which essentially remains in the hands of the small group of Fatah founders and early recruits—men who are now in their late fifties and sixties, with paunches and graying hair, and whose decades-old revolutionary slogans are anathema both to the leadership inside the Occupied Territories and to the angry young women and men who led the *intifada* there? And it was the *intifada*, more than anything else, that brought home to Arafat the extent to which he had to rely on the loyalty of the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories to sustain his credibility. He has had no other enforcer: no army, no institutions, no state.

I remembered something that a Western diplomat had told me about Arafat: "In a sense, the Oslo accord was

BLUE HYDRANGEA

Mop-headed transplant from late summer,
hydrangea macrophylla, blue wave,
you were colorless when I brought you home,
as if the ocean had travelled a vast distance
and washed out in your veins.

Secret white mirror of my convalescence,
echo of forgotten twilights
and long ago dawns, lost Rilkean cousin,
how many nights have I sat alone with you,
longing for transformation?

But nothing happens. Blue hydrangea,
most soiled of household gods,
I need a sudden flare of color, a torch
to explode through the sterile florets
and burn away the night.

—EDWARD HIRSCH

Arafat's signal to move upstairs, where he's got to make serious decisions on things he's never cared about: the economy, infrastructure projects. There are a lot of Israelis who want to talk to him about joint-venture projects, but he's still trying to keep the reins on almost everything in his hands. It's a classic Arab role, but other Arab leaders have well-trained staffs, they complete things, they concentrate. Arafat flies off, all over the world, and no one can make a decision when he's not here. He so exhausts his staff that they fall asleep in meetings. Nothing ever gets done. He has simply got to begin to delegate, to open up the P.L.O. to reform, and to end its endemic corruption. Otherwise, everything he's worked for, for so long, is going to topple like a house of cards."

In Arafat's office a few nights after the Id ceremony, I asked him if, once the Oslo agreement was implemented, he would feel on the brink of triumph, or if the major problems would still lie ahead.

"Our biggest challenge is not the war but after the war," he said. "Every power occupying Latin-American or African or Asian countries left behind all the infrastructure. The railways, the bridges, the water system, the communications, the roads, the hospitals, the radio or the TV. Except the Israelis—they are leaving nothing behind. All the infrastructure in the Occupied Territories has been completely destroyed, and we have to start from zero—even below zero. . . . And, as I told President Clinton when I met with him after the signing, we will become either another Somalia or another Singapore."

"What most concerns you?" I asked.

"Security issues, law and order," he said. "There is an enormous leadership vacuum in Gaza and the West Bank, total confusion, anarchy." He referred repeatedly to the guns and other weapons that had been flooding the black markets of Gaza and the West Bank in recent months, and seemed deeply concerned about the possibility that the Palestinian movement—and its various military arms—could, even as he attempted to build an infrastructure, tear itself apart.

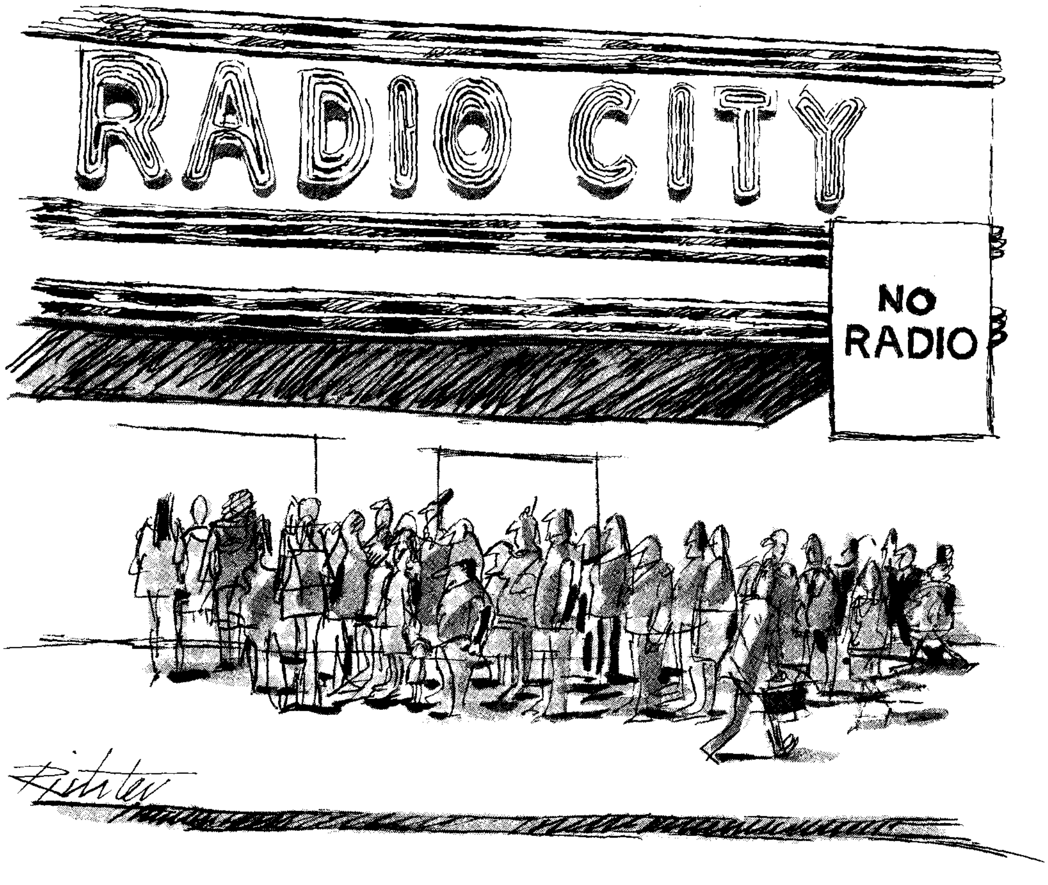
"This influx of arms—this is happening under the noses of the Israelis," he shouted, pounding his desk. "Some Israeli soldiers and officers are involved in this, yet no action is being taken by the Israeli government. Perhaps they are thinking that they no longer need worry. These troubles will be facing us, and not them."

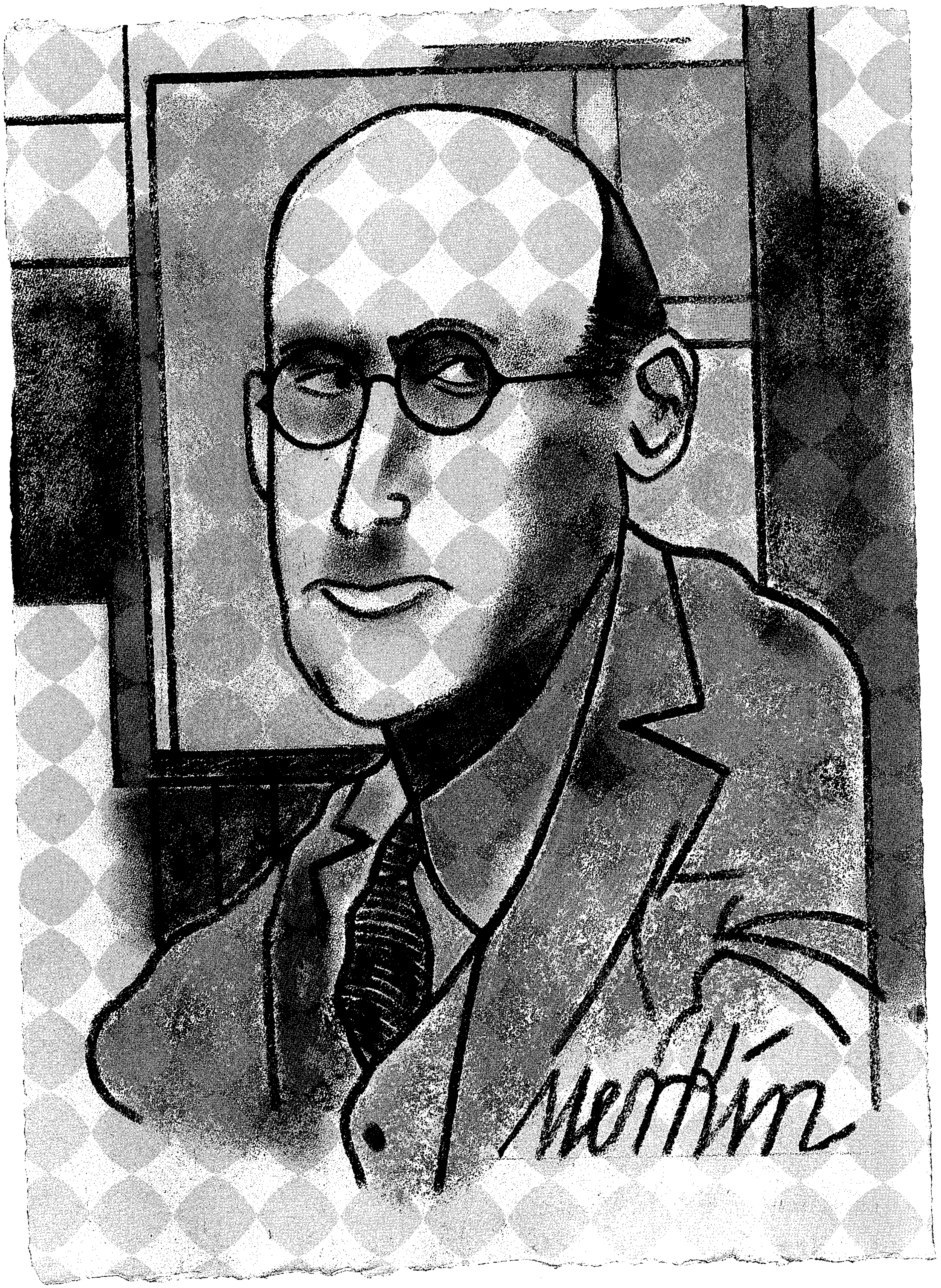
He fell silent for a moment, and then he added, "What I am inheriting could be another Afghanistan."

Among Arafat's advisers and among Western diplomats, there is mounting concern over whether the new Palestinian police force—of some nine thousand men, drawn mostly from Arafat's former fighters, and now being trained by the British in Jordanian and Egyptian camps—will be able to contain the situation in the Occupied Territories once the Israelis withdraw. If it cannot, there is speculation that Arafat, after a triumphant entry into Gaza and Jericho, might not be able to live there permanently for some time.

Nonetheless, as he told me one night in his office, he has reached one of his most important goals. "From the very beginning, since the beginning of this century, there has been a concerted attempt to erase the Palestinians from the Middle East's political and geographic map," he said. "I will never forget that day in 1952 when the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Trygve Lie, took the Palestinian issue off the General Assembly's agenda, and shifted it instead to the refugee organization. With a sweep of his hand, Mr. Lie relegated us from being a moral issue and a political cause to being figures in the United Nations' refugee files. So, for me, our greatest single accomplishment has been that we have succeeded in reclaiming our place and the presence of our people on the map. And no one, no one, can any longer deny five million Palestinians their rights, their sacred, holy places, or their dreams."

Given the fierce opposition by militant Palestinians and Israelis alike, many observers are skeptical that last Wednesday's agreement will ever be fully implemented, and they may be right. On the other hand, I can't help recalling a remark of Arafat's on the day of the feast of Id, when the negotiations with the Israelis appeared to be stalemated. I asked him if he really thought that he would be returning to Jericho with Suha within the coming months, and he replied, "Ask me that question when we meet there." ♦

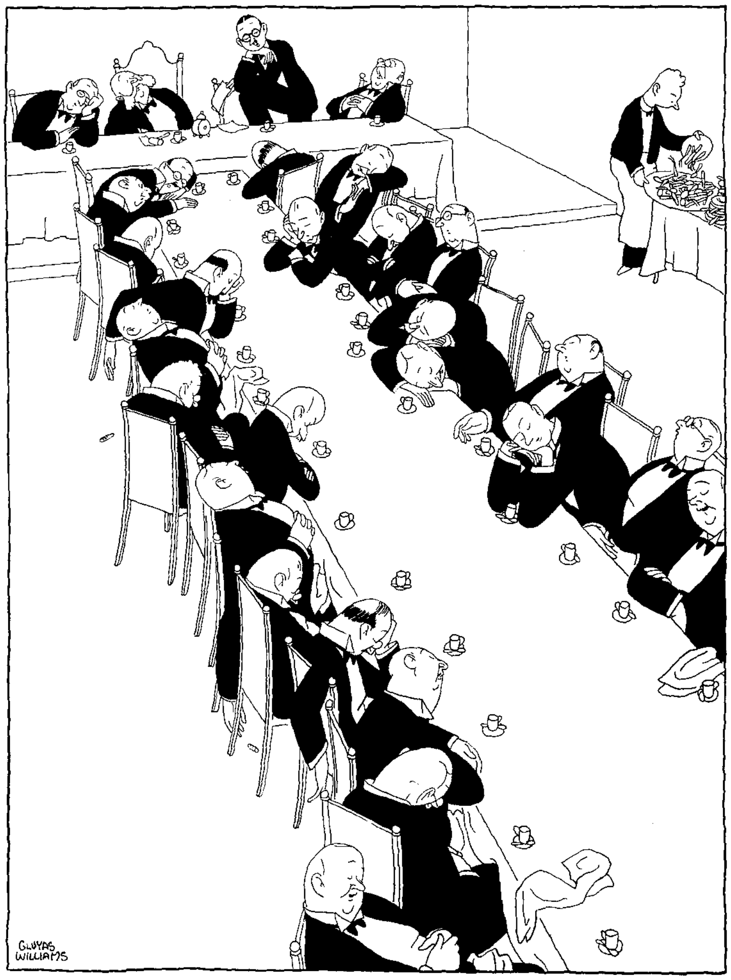




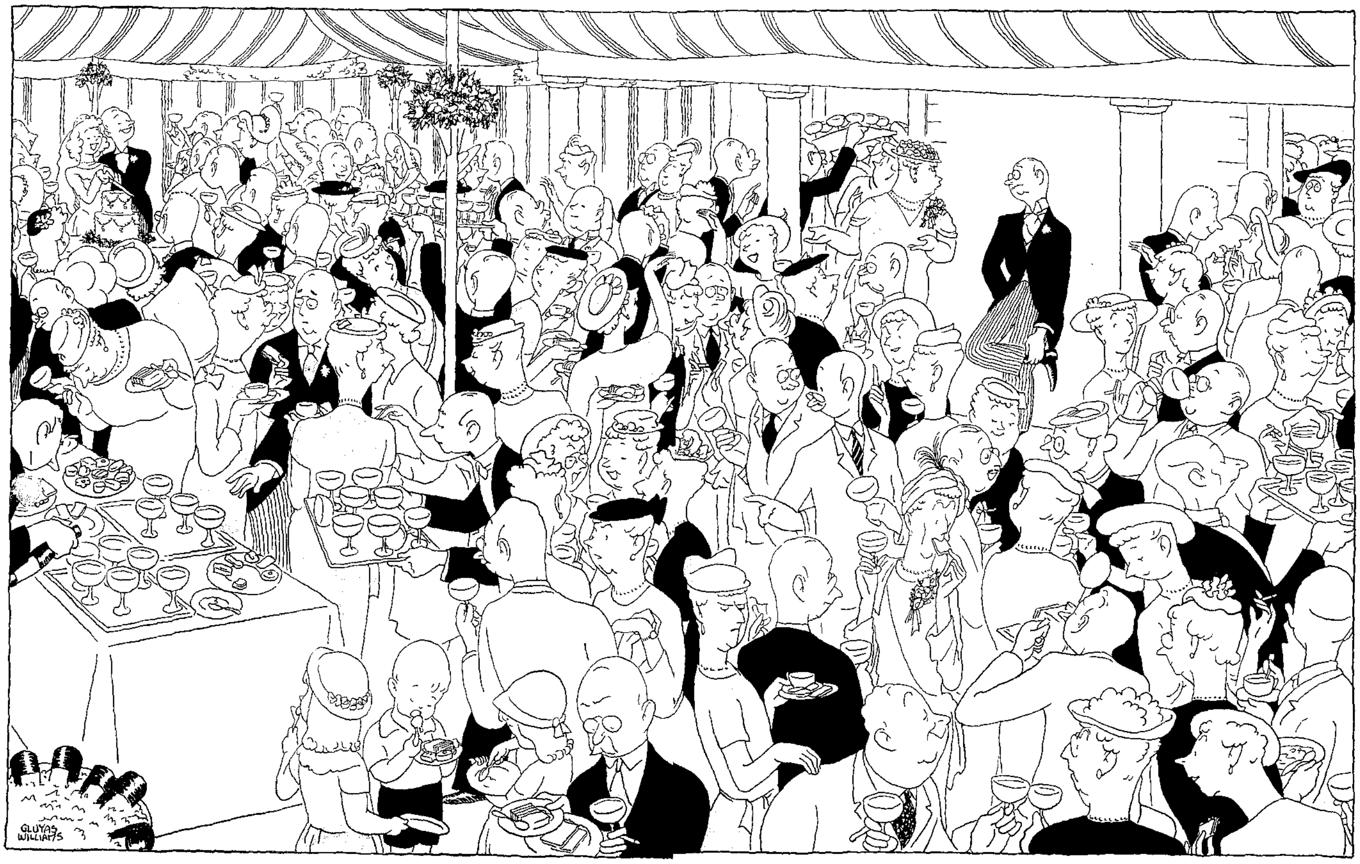
FAMILY ALBUM · BY RICHARD MERKIN

GLUYAS WILLIAMS

If Charles Addams was in charge of the Bewitched and Peter Arno of the Bothered, then it is fair to say that Gluyas Williams satirized the Bewildered, and particularly the urban bewildered, in the Golden Age of *The New Yorker.* His specialty was the ordinary man faced with a seemingly ordinary situation, like eating corn on the cob in a dining car, but the results were far from ordinary; they were hilarious, and were immaculately rendered. Influenced by masters of line like Ralph Barton and H. M. Bateman (an English genius who never truly found an American audience), Williams was one of the greatest *New Yorker* draftsmen. His world was basically a vision in line—unimpeachable line. He had extraordinary facility at drawing cavernous architectural settings with multitudes of dressy folk—a sort of "Where's Waldo?"-ism of the Great Depression period. And the drawings in his ongoing series "Industrial Crises" were eagerly awaited by readers. Panoramic, exacting, and witty, they were stage sets for what Williams did best. He was a soulmate of Robert Benchley, whose outlook matched Williams's almost to a T, and who once said of him, "I know of no other artist who combines, as Williams does, the sure insight into the common mind and a technique which might well be turned to more important things—if there *were* things more important." ♦



Industrial Crises: Annual Banquet of the Sanka Coffee Company



The Reception

OPPOSITE PAGE: RICHARD MERKIN

FICTION

MISTRAL

BY ANGELA HUTH

I don't know why, and there is nothing I can do about it, but I have this way of irritating people. It's a sad affliction, but I'm unable to change matters, and every day is a minefield. I know that at any moment I am liable to do or say something that causes Mr. Arthur or Mr. Gerald such annoyance they can barely trust themselves to speak.

My name is Annie Hawker. I am housekeeper to Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald, and have held that position for eleven years. Both gentlemen are in their mid-sixties. Mr. Arthur was once briefly married to a certain Lucretia. The very thought of this lady brings out the worst in him, though her name is rarely mentioned. There are two grownup children: Deirdre and Brian. Both of them are over thirty, unmarried, and still searching their way in life. Their telephone calls to their father don't inspire much sympathy. I hear him snarling down the telephone several times a week, though I have reason to believe he is a generous father, and he sends checks to England with some frequency. When Deirdre and Brian come for a visit—some would call it a prolonged free holiday, as I'm bound to observe to Mr. Arthur—tension in the house rises. Mr. Arthur gets no pleasure from their company, and the feeling is all too plainly mutual. Well, I have to say it: They aren't very rewarding offspring.

Their visits put Mr. Gerald into a bad temper, too. He stomps off most mornings, walks the hills or visits friends all day, and then is barely civil to them over dinner. Jealous, I suppose. Mr. Gerald was never married, and the children remind him of Mr. Arthur's past. Or it may be that he simply finds their ungrateful presence in the house annoying. Which it is. Secretly, all three of us look forward to their departure.

I took the job two years after my husband, Simon, died in an industrial accident. Arm torn off in a machine in the mill, and he wasn't even a manual worker. He was an inspector. Trouble was, he was always poking his nose—in this case, his arm—too far into things, being a conscientious inspector. I knew in my bones some disaster would happen one day. So I wasn't surprised by the amputation or the complications that followed. Or, indeed, by his death within the week. Nor did I waste much time grieving over his departure. Our marriage had never been of a high calibre: we had just chuntered along for ten years, childless, him travelling round the North, inspecting, me working for the Inland Revenue.

I had always had a secret inclination to write. But I knew there was no hope, for all that I was good at essays at school. Everyone wants to write and thinks they can. But there was no evidence to make me believe I'd be any good or stand a chance of publication. So I abandoned that dream in order to avoid disappointment, and, funnily enough, quite enjoyed my time at the Inland Revenue.

Anyhow, two years after Simon's death the thought came to me: Now's your chance, Annie, I thought. Make a dash for it before you're too old. Go for a complete change. Try a new life.

I started looking at advertisements for jobs abroad, and, as luck would have it, came upon Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald's within days. The description of the place appealed to me—hilltop cluster of houses in the Lubéron region of France. Beautiful scenery, peace, swimming pool, sun: the stuff of most people's dreams. They were interviewing applicants for the job in London. I went down the night before, stayed with my sister in Barnet so as not to be in a fuss on the morning. I dressed carefully in a nice navy suit and pink blouse. It occurred to me a younger type of person would probably be applying for the job, of the jeans-and-T-shirt school, the kind who care more about being in the sun than about what they give in return. I wanted to make a good impression, assure them of my reliability, my willingness to work hard, and, above all, my unfailing sense of humor.

Well, it worked. They were a little stiff, the two gentlemen, sitting side by side on a plumped-up sofa. Very tanned, they were, with almost identical thin gray hair. In a word, we liked one another from the start. "Do call me Annie," I said, when the interview was concluded. "None of this Mrs. Hawker stuff, now, if you please." They smiled a little instead of agreeing to this, and made no reciprocal proposal. I realized at once that they were the sort of gentlemen who, at their age, liked to retain a little of the old-school formality, and hoped I had not blundered in my friendly suggestion. Evidently, I had not, for they offered me the job within two days.

Just a week later, I fell in love with Le Beau Banc at first sight. They had bought the place, a deserted hillside hamlet, some twenty years before, built a road (still pretty rocky), and renovated the whole place with great skill and imagination. Today, the small houses are a monument to local craftsmen: beautifully converted, with mellow tiled floors and lime-washed walls, their old shutters scrubbed and oiled, their old beams stripped and sealed. One of these—quite the nicest, I think, with its little terrace overlooking a vast valley that is always blue with either lavender or mist—is entirely mine. A very far cry from our house in Sheffield, I can tell you. I put up my few things, my picture of Morecambe Bay and my mother's shell mirror and so on, and it felt like home from the start. I can't imagine living anywhere else.

Mr. Gerald, being a keen and skilled gardener, planted the whole place, too. There are peach and olive trees, English roses, and mimosa. Every path is lined with lavender, and a huge fig tree shades the terrace. Butterflies flutter all day and the crickets sing every evening, ruffling the silence. Oh, it's paradise, as I tell my sister. I know how lucky I am.

The original idea, Mr. Arthur told me, was to make the place a kind of commune or colony for artists and writers. The plan was that each would have his individual house in which he worked in peace, and everyone would meet for dinner in the evening. But, long before my arrival, this plan failed. It seemed that many a young so-called artist, plus boy- or girlfriend, checked in for a long free holiday full of delights of a certain kind but in which little artistically was accomplished. So Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald decided only to put friends and relations in the guesthouses: they themselves live in the large main house, which is my responsibility.

To be honest, in all these years I have never quite discovered what Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald actually do. Obviously, they are gentlemen of some means, and have no need of regular employment. But Mr. Gerald seems always to be on one of the many telephones in his study, often to auction houses in London and New York, as far as I can gather. Very thick, expensive art magazines arrive for him every week, and sometimes foreign gentlemen come for lunch. On those occasions Mr. Gerald suggests I cook something French rather than the Yorkshire favorites we have on our own. The guests bring with them such funny-looking old pots, which they handle with great care and talk about in low voices.

Mr. Arthur, in his study, is on the telephone a great deal of the time, too, and I understand he has interests in South Africa. But it doesn't bother me that I don't know the exact nature of their professions. All that concerns me is what I have to do to be satisfactory in my job, and that I know precisely. My employers are gentlemen of routine. They thrive on the domestic timetables they have devised for themselves, and I do my best to see they are not interrupted. It's not hard to take care of them in the manner which they enjoy, because they are easy to please as long as everything is spick-and-span and meals are on time. They pay me a very fair wage and give me plenty of money for housekeeping, so I am able to call in a plumber or electrician, if need be, and pay him without having to bother one of the gentlemen.

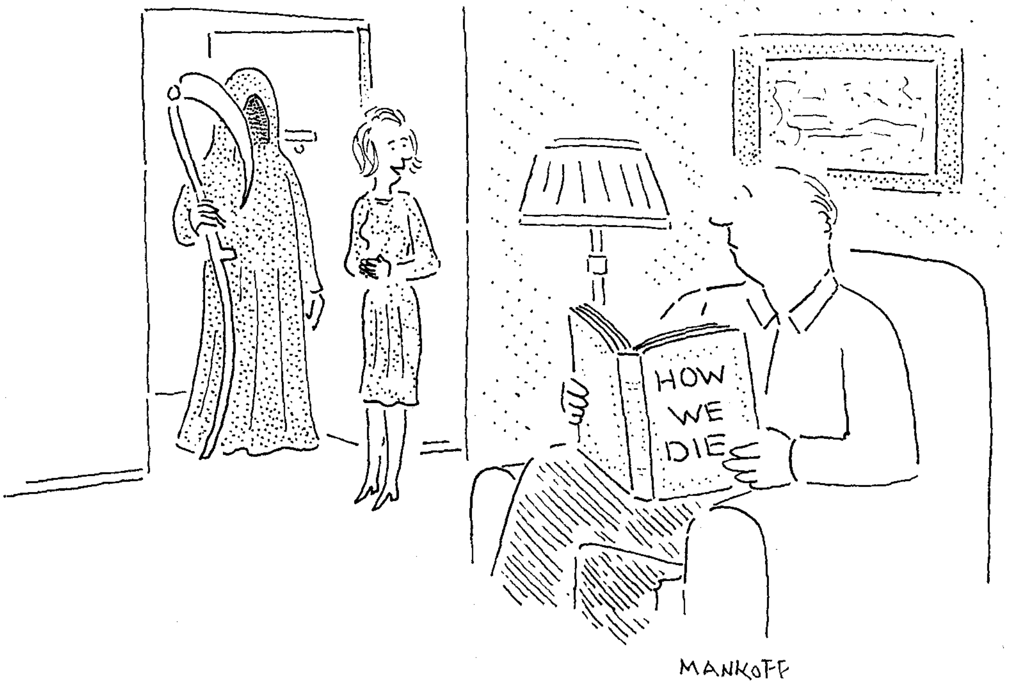
My day starts early. I'm in the kitchen by seven, everything nice and orderly as I've left it the night before. I step outside, enjoying the early morning before the sun has become too hot, and pick a ripe peach or fig for the bowl. I lay the table—blue terra-cotta cups and plates from a local pottery—put croissants in the oven and the coffee in the jug. Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald appear, regular as clockwork, at eight o'clock, each in his blue-and-white kimono.

"Morning, Mr. Gerald, Mr. Arthur," I say. "Had a good night, have we?"

I have to admit they don't answer me anymore, because, I believe, although they appreciate that my question is the height of good manners they don't want to bother me with the troubles of their night. (Mr. Arthur suffers from asthma, Mr. Gerald has problems with his digestion.) But I always like to be polite and show an interest. It used to worry me when they gave up answering, but I don't mind anymore. I'm used to their ways, and they're used to mine.

To be quite honest, the position of housekeeper is an amorphous one, not easy. The problem of address, for a start. I appreciated that they wanted to maintain their little barrier, to denote my position as employee rather than friend. So when they insisted on calling me Mrs. Hawker I did not object, and soon got used to it. They did make one big concession: I should not call them "sir," they said, this being a newly democratic world, and, as they both had complicated double-barrelled names, Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald was the compromise we settled on. That was how they had been addressed by the staff at home as children, they explained, and they thought it a charming custom. I agreed.

To begin with, I found it hard to know what was expected of me. What exactly was my place? I never asked the question specifically, and they never made it clear to me. Normally, for instance, I would lunch with them at the kitchen table, or on the terrace, but the invitation was never extended should there be a visitor, no matter how often that person came. For some reason, they always like to dine on their own, so once their food is cooked and on the table I have to hang around waiting to clear away. I mean, I've never got on with watching French television—after all these years I haven't managed to grasp the French language at all, though I'm pretty good at making myself understood in the shops. So the evenings are a little bleak, though I enjoy my knitting, or my latest Catherine Cookson. Then again, it's a little confusing when people come for a drink. "Fetch the bottle of Chablis out of the fridge, if you will, Mrs. Hawker," says Mr. Arthur, and in a moment I'm placing it on the



"My, oh, my, what a co-inky dinky."

table by the sofa, on a tray with six crystal glasses and a pottery bowl of fresh olives. "And have one yourself, Mrs. Hawker," he often says, when the guests have all been given their glasses. At that point, what am I supposed to do? Early on, I made the mistake of lingering, supposing that, having accepted a glass of wine, I was required to join in the conversation. I remember the occasion so well: the local architect was there to discuss renovations to the old barn, along with his wife, not an English speaker, and her brother. Nobody knew one another very well in those days, so I saw fit to fill the rather awkward silence with some comment upon the pleasantness of the weather. As nobody leapt in to follow up my lead, I took it upon myself to compare the climate of Provence with that of Morecambe, where, I explained, I had spent so many of my childhood holidays. Possibly I let my tongue run away with me a little in striving to be helpful, for I remember describing my fondness for whelks. I went on to recall the time I fell off the pier and was rescued by the famous comedian who was starring in the summer show that year. The very thought of all this made me laugh, of course, and it took me some time to realize I was the only one laughing. The three French guests looked completely bemused, and Mr. Gerald and Mr. Arthur, behind tight little smiles, seemed to be gritting their teeth. Then Mr. Gerald came up to me and in a low, urgent voice suggested it was time I began preparing the dinner. I left the room with all the dignity I could muster, as Mr. Arthur began to speak to the guests in French, no doubt explaining my extraordinary behavior.

I have to say, nothing was said. They did not reprove me. And after that, when wine was being served, one of them would bring a glass to me in the kitchen. Well, I got the message: I did not take offense—I'm not one to take offense, it's so time-consuming. I had learned my humiliating lesson and thereafter strove to be the essence of tact. I also realized at that time that there was no question of Mr. Gerald and Mr. Arthur *ever* being my intimates: while they were rarely anything but friendly, they would never be friends. It was necessary to them to keep their distance. They liked the protection of formality, and it was not my place to try to persuade them to behave in any other way. "Despite the small grumbles, Annie," my sister once wrote from Barnet, "you sound very happy. Mr. Gerald and Mr. Arthur's formal ways of speaking and so on seem to have had their influence on you, too, if you don't mind my saying so. Do you realize you write in a very grand way now? You use lots of new grand words and complicated sentences these days. It's hardly ever you break into your old way of writing." I had not realized that, though Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald's way of describing the simplest things had always intrigued me. They were elegant in their use of language. Had this really had some influence on my own writing? It was quite a thought. "It must mean you admire them," my sister added.

THIS, my eleventh summer here, has been unusually hot. Mr. Gerald and Mr. Arthur have never quite accustomed themselves to the heat, and they react badly. They both become short-tempered, petulant, though they do their best to disguise this state. They change their minds a good deal, and give me conflicting orders, all of which is very taxing, as the sweat pours down my face in the kitchen. But I try to keep my calm, and reassure them that cooler weather must be on its way. Of course, neither of them is getting any younger. In the unkind light of the midday sun, I notice that their hair, identical pure-white now, is also similar in its thinness. They puff it over their shining pink temples in an effort to make it look thicker than it really is. Mr. Arthur goes a funny color, sometimes, after lunch, and extends his afternoon siesta by at least an hour. Mr. Gerald has become fanatical about his pills, vitamins of every kind, and only takes very short walks these days, always with his stick. Time hasn't been particularly kind to me, either: I've inherited my mother's arthritis in the knee, which keeps me awake many hours of the night. And my childhood migraines come back from time to time. But I keep these things to myself. If Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald thought there was any danger of my cracking up, heaven knows what they would do. I may inadvertently irritate them, but I am their prop, their lifeblood, their absolute necessity.

Two days ago, the mistral began. I've learned to dread the mistral. It's the only thing that makes me seriously contemplate returning to Morecambe for my retirement. All the stories about its weird and unsettling effects are true. As soon as the wind begins to tug at the trees and beat hotly against my window at night, I feel my blood rise. Anxieties turn my skin to gooseflesh. I try to be reasonable, work out what they are about, but they remain nameless. I find it hard to be myself. Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald are affected, too. Their appetites go, and they snap at each other and spend more time on their telephones. "We must all brace ourselves, Mr. Arthur, Mr. Gerald," I say. "It affects us all the same," I say, and they slam their doors.

Two days ago, the wind started up with its familiar tugging and snapping, blowing my skirts into warm billows above my knees when I go to hang out the washing. It sneaks through any door left open for a moment, ruffling papers and blowing things to the floor. For a few hours I took a positive attitude: the relief, I thought, of a light breeze to stir the heavy heat we had had for so many weeks. But, in truth, the mistral is not so much light as malevolent. Its aim is to taunt, to goad, to drive you mad. Well, it's not going to beat me, I told myself as I slammed shut the kitchen window and scooped up the pile of flour I had arranged on the table for my dough. "One of God's little tricks sent to try us," I said to Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald at breakfast. Their temples shone with sweat. They answered with silence.

At lunch, I could see that both gentlemen were agitated. I put the pot of chicken casserole on the table, then took up a plate to help Mr. Arthur first, as I always did.

"I couldn't eat anything hot on a day like this," he said, and wiped at his forehead with a silk handkerchief.

"But we always start casseroles in late September, Mr. Arthur," I reminded him.

"I tell you, I can't eat a bloody casserole in this heat. I'll have bread and cheese and fruit." He looked quite flushed, and Mr. Gerald, I noticed, was pulling at his earlobe, a habit he has whenever he is out of sorts.

"Don't you worry yourself, now, Mr. Arthur," I said, cool as anything, determined not to be offended by his rejection of my casserole. "It won't take me a moment to run you up a nice tomato—"

"Did you hear what I said, Mrs. Hawker, woman? I'll have cheese and fruit, so you can stuff your infuriating concern . . ." He trailed off, picked up a length of bread.

Of all the offensive elements in his response, it was the word "woman" that got me most, cut me to the quick. *Woman!* Indicating chattel, inferior, nuisance. *Woman!* Never had I been so insulted in all my years here. But I quickly took a hold on myself. No point in shouting back. It was, after all, the mistral that acted like some devil within him.

"And you, Mr. Gerald?" I asked, plunging the ladle into the casserole. "You'll have some, will you?"

"Just a little, Mrs. Hawker. Thank you."

It was a silent lunch. Mr. Arthur left before the coffee, his fine poplin shirt darkened with patches of sweat. Mr. Gerald anxiously watched him go.

"It's this heat," he said, by way of conciliation.

"It gets us all down, Mr. Gerald."

"Quite."

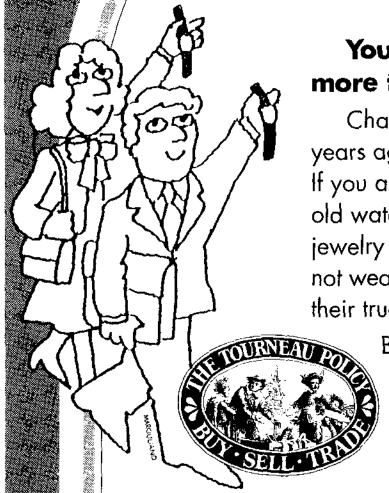
Once I had poured his coffee, he stood up and said he would take it to his room. I suppose he no more wanted to be alone with me than I wanted to be alone with him. In this kind of atmosphere it was safer for all of us to be on our own.

"Mr. Arthur will be hungry by tonight, at least," he said with a very faint smile, which I took to be an apology for his friend's behavior.

"We'll have cold collations," I reassured him. "Don't you worry."

"Thank you, Mrs. Hawker. That would be advisable."

Once he had gone, I continued to sit at the kitchen table, stirring my coffee. I could hear footsteps on stone floors, several doors banging. I could hear shouting, though the words were not clear. Then all was quiet. Just the buzzing of several flies and the snip, snip,



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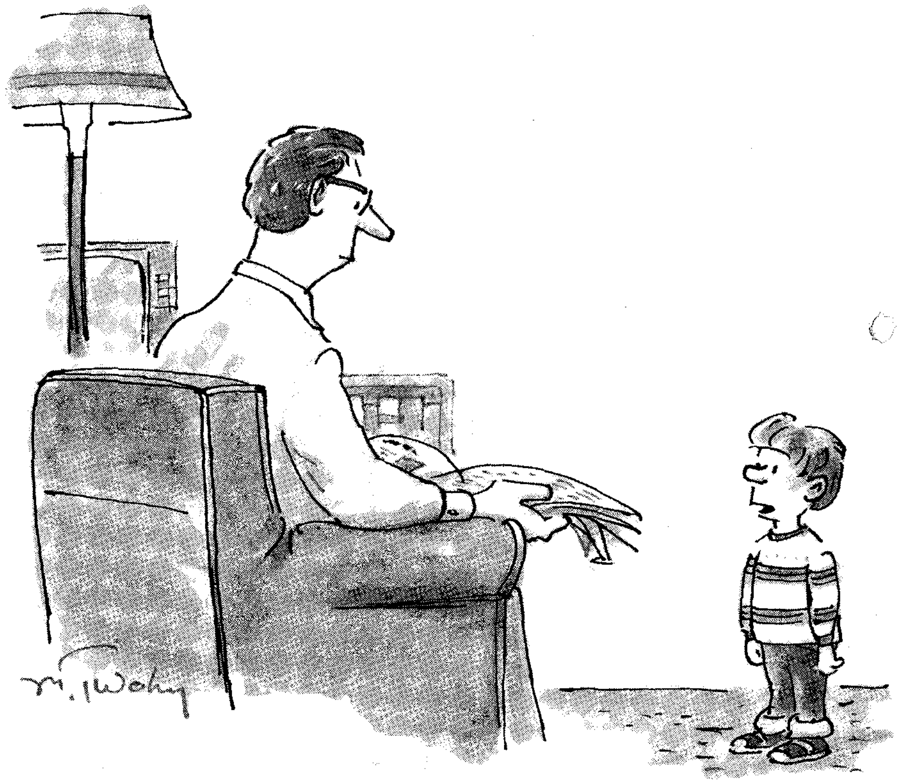

"Dad, Jason says you're fuelled by greed."

• •

snip of the wind against the warm stone of the outside walls.

I don't know how long I sat there listening to the frayed rhythms of the wind. But eventually, true to habit, I stirred myself to clear the table and wash up. Then I went out into the garden. There the fig and peach trees were tossing restlessly about, their great heads of silvery leaves trying to dodge the nagging and the teasing of the wind. Their usually calm shade was broken into a thousand moving pieces. Butterflies, driven from their resting places, were tossed in the air like tiny sailing boats on an invisible rough sea, and bees clung tightly to the lavender, silent in their concentration. I walked to the edge of the grounds, to where the huge oak tree guarded the precipice. Its branches moved slightly, and its leaves snarled, but it acted with none of the frenzy of the fruit trees. It had learned to resist, I thought. I looked down into the great bowl of a valley, where fields of lavender and corn dipped and swayed, confusing the bee-eaters. And, overhead, clouds scurried like lemmings in a dark-blue sky. My skirts whipped about my legs. My hair lashed my face. There was not a moment's stillness. I felt so sad, so profoundly, inexplicably sad. The idea came to me that all I had to do was take a couple of steps farther to be consumed forever by the blue of the valley.

When eventually I returned to the kitchen I found, to my horror, that Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald were seated at the table—thunderous expressions.

"Ah, Mrs. Hawker," said Mr. Arthur, all polite sarcasm, "and what has happened to our tea?"

"It's nearly twenty past four," said Mr. Gerald. "Very unlike you, Mrs. Hawker, to have no tea prepared by now."

There was a moment's quiet, just the wind still tugging away at the windows. Then I let them have it.

"Fucking hell, *gentlemen*," I screamed. "For once, just for once in eleven years I'm ten minutes late with your tea. What a disaster. What a bloody disaster! For you two lazy spoilt selfish slobs, that's a *major* disaster, because you're such hopeless bastards you can't so much as switch on a kettle, fill a pot, fetch the butter from the fridge—do you know which the *fridge* is, Mr. Arthur, Mr. Gerald?"

Perfectly synchronized, their flabby

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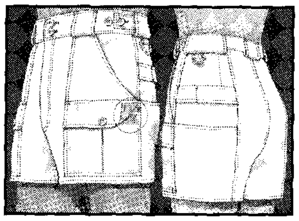

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old mouths fell open. But their eyes could not meet, nor could they look at me.

"Aren't you ashamed," I raved on, "at your absolute uselessness, your total inadequacy? You employ me to wait on you hand and foot, do your bidding at every turn: you rely on me completely, useless prats for all your money—"

"Mrs. Hawker," said Mr. Arthur.

"Mrs. Hawker," added Mr. Gerald.

"Calm yourself."

"Calm yourself."

Calm! In fact, I did feel calmer now. I knew my words would come more tightly, with more menace. "Who could be calm at the thought of a future waiting on two spoiled old sods? Who could be calm thinking that old age would mean still darning your socks, getting your porridge just right while my own life just ebbs away? Course, if you live to bury me, I've no doubt you'll commission a nice marble headstone engraved with the tribute '*A good and faithful servant.*' "

"You've gone too far, Mrs. Hawker," said Mr. Arthur, dabbing at the string of sweat on his nose.

"Much too far," said Mr. Gerald, running a finger round his damp collar. "You're not yourself. The mistral, it affects us all."

"Not yourself, indeed."

"Not myself?" I gave a nasty laugh, which made them both jump in their seats. "As a matter of fact, Mr. Arthur, Mr. Gerald, that's just what I am being at this moment—*myself.* For the first time in all these years, *myself.* The bit you've never shown the slightest desire to know about, to see. Well, I've only just begun. Sorry to shock you, but there's much, much more I'd like to say . . ."

I saw a look pass between them then, and Mr. Arthur gave an almost invisible sigh. The words I had ready to shoot at them were flashing in my head in such blinding lights that I could not quite read them: something to do with bitterness at the waste of my life, nothing but the satisfaction of two spoiled old men to show for it. The regret at so meager an achievement, and the sadness—could they not understand the sadness?

They seemed to be waiting for me to go on. But anger had left me inarticulate. Words, insults evaporated. So I began to moan, a noise similar to the wind. As I picked up the huge pottery bowl, Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald looked scared. I flung the fruit at them, moan-

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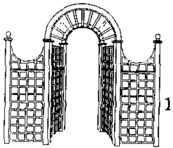

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ing louder. A brilliant aim: figs caught Mr. Arthur on the chest, making smeary pink marks on his clean shirt, and bursting obscenely over his fingers when he put up a hand to shield his face. An overripe peach slobbered down Mr. Gerald's temple. I laughed again. I picked random crockery from the dresser and began to throw it onto the stone floor. The shotgun explosions of cups and saucers and large dinner plates were pure music: pottery breaks into noisy crumbs. Glass next. Half a dozen wineglasses landed in the stainless-steel sink. They smashed with a high-pitched scream, drowning the noise of the wind. Then a jar of olives—they rolled about the messed-up floor like jet marbles, smearing it with olive oil. The homemade jams: two large jars, Mr. Gerald's favorites, burst on the floor, sticky plums sploshing among the olives and china. And, finally, the inspiration of a bag of flour. As I picked up a kitchen knife to slash the bag, for speed, Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald turned a matching deathly white. In a moment they were whiter still as I held it high and let it scatter down like a snowstorm. I loved its silent descent into random piles that covered everything.

"This is . . ." Mr. Arthur stood up, a floury spectre. Flour fell mistily from him.

". . . too much, Mrs. Hawker." Mr. Gerald, still troubled by peach in his eye, stood up, too.

Something told me they were right. Besides, the energy was ebbing, just as the words had done earlier on.

"If I've caused you just a moment's thought, Mr. Arthur, Mr. Gerald," I said, "then this has been worth it." Head very high, I left the room.

THAT was all some four hours ago. Since then, back in my room, I've been writing like a lunatic. All this stuff. "Giving vent to," as they say. Letting it all out. As I pause for a moment, I look out of the window and notice the trees are still. A bee-eater on the telegraph wires, eyes speared onto the lavender bush below, does not sway. The wind has died. Only the scratching of my pen in the silence. Then the buzzer goes. I pick up the telephone.

"Mrs. Hawker? It's almost eight o'clock."

"So it is, Mr. Arthur," I say.

"Dinnertime," he says.

"I'll be along, Mr. Arthur."

I stand, stretch. It's one of those dusky blue evenings I love so much. The crickets will start up again, now the wind has gone. Funny how much I've enjoyed the writing. The hours just flew. Perhaps I shall try it again. Perhaps that's how I shall spend my time off, in my old age, writing stories at last. I brush a streak of flour from my sleeve. I am very calm.

In the kitchen Mr. Gerald is laying the table—three places. Very unusual, for I only dine with them at Christmas and on my birthday. He wears one of my aprons. Candles are lighted. A bottle of good wine is open. Over by the oven, Mr. Arthur is prodding expertly at the chicken casserole and tossing a salad.

There's no sign that anything untoward (a favorite word of Mr. Gerald's) has taken place. China and glass from the cupboard have replaced the missing things on the dresser. There's a bowl of olives—Mr. Arthur or Mr. Gerald must have been down to the village to buy more—and the flour jar is filled. What an afternoon they must have had! I try not to smile. I say nothing.

"Sit down, Annie," says Mr. Arthur, back to me.

"It's our turn to wait on you, Annie," says Mr. Gerald, without looking at me.

I do as they ask, and we have the dinner of a lifetime.

Now it's past midnight. Even as I finish this story, I find it hard to believe it all happened. The merging of fact and fiction in memory, however soon after the event, is intriguing. How much of what I have described was exactly like that? I have tried to be accurate, but if someone were to ask Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald to describe the events of today, some years from now, I've no doubt they would tell quite a different story. What I *do* know is that everyone is entitled to such terrible days now and then, and that, in the end, is what Mr. Arthur and Mr. Gerald understood, and that's why I love them and will work for them for the rest of my days.

Besides, they called me Annie. Of course—and I must stop now, I'm feeling suddenly tired—I know that was only for tonight. Mrs. Hawker is how they like me to be, and why not? So Mrs. Hawker I'll be again in the morning. But at least I have been Annie for a night.

I set my alarm. ♦

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THE CRITICS

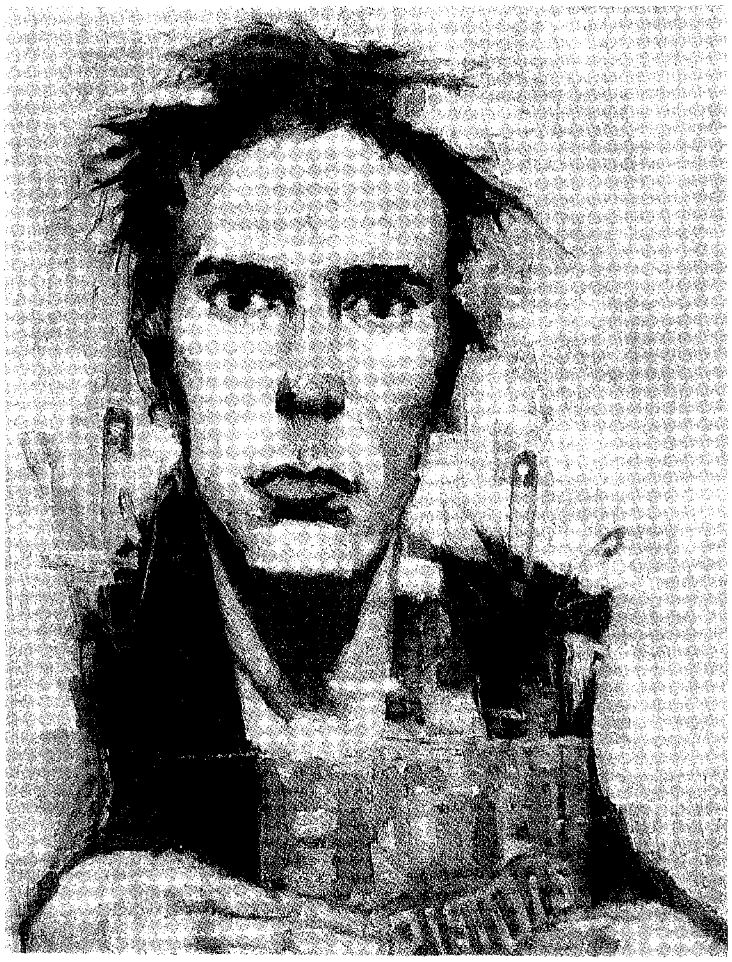
BOOKS

ROTTEN AND VICIOUS

BY JAMES WOLCOTT

Rotten
by John Lydon
(St. Martin's; $22.95)

For a band that divorced after just one album, undone by drugs, greed, and violence, the Sex Pistols have left a long paper trail. Their punk exploits, which spanned three years in the mid-seventies, have been documented down to the last puncture hole. Managed by Malcolm McLaren, who prided himself on being the Diaghilev of pop decadence, a pimp of piss elegance, the original Sex Pistols consisted of Glen Matlock on bass, Paul Cook on drums, Steve Jones on guitar, and, on vocals, John Lydon, whose green teeth earned him the nickname Johnny Rotten. The mild-mannered Matlock was soon bounced from the band and replaced by Rotten's friend and schoolmate Sid Vicious (who was named after a hamster Rotten once had)—a personnel switch that proved to be both the making and the unmaking of the Sex Pistols. With Matlock, the Pistols might have become a tight squad, toting their guitars like rifles, in the style of the Clash or the Jam; God forbid, they might have achieved *musicianship*. In Vicious, whose trash presence transcended talent, the Pistols found the living vehicle of their autodestruct nihilism. His very roughness suited McLaren's scheme of creating a subversive craze from scratch. Sid also represented Rotten's ideal of "shambolic chaos." Once Sid had mastered his onstage sneer, he became—in a kind of parody of Ringo's role in the Beatles—the band's punchy mascot.



The onetime Johnny Rotten tells how he and Sid Vicious became the original Beavis and Butt-head.

N. ASCENCIOS

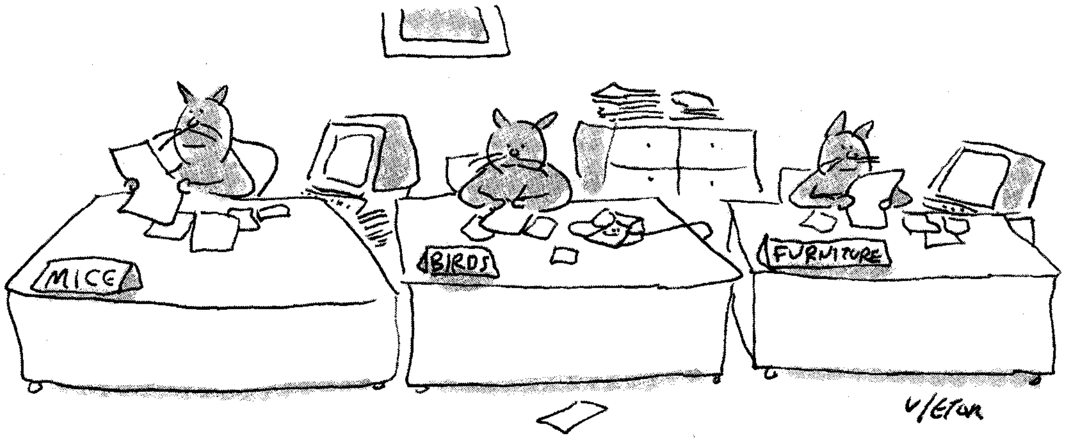
The Pistols' 1978 campaign to conquer America was the Beatles' story replayed as farce, with McLaren substituting for Brian Epstein, and springing on the world not four happy, head-bobbing lads but a loutish crew that looked like a box of bloody Kleenexes. Where the Beatles inspired an epic outpouring of joy, the Pistols expired in a fit of pique and a volley of vomit; they were both the perpetrators and the victims of a scam that went sour. "Ever get the feeling you've been cheated?" Rotten asked the audience at the end of the Sex Pistols concert in San Francisco, the final stop on their nightmarish American tour. (In San Antonio, the band was barraged with beer cans and hot dogs. In Dallas, Vicious mutilated himself onstage with a broken bottle.) After the San Francisco show—a bad-vibes event, during which Rotten exhorted the audience, "Be a man, be someone, kill someone, be a man, kill yourself!"—the band dissolved. It made sense that the Sex Pistols should break up at the end of their first American tour, the critic Lester Bangs wrote; it showed a perverse integrity on their part—as he put it, "we do our work and go." But go where? Sid Vicious had nowhere to go but down. As if taking Rotten's advice to heart, he died of a heroin overdose a year later in New York, after fatally plunging a knife into his girlfriend Nancy Spungen. Zombie lovers, Sid and Nancy were the Kurt Cobain and Courtney Love of their day, giving the lie to the phrase "too dumb to die."

PUNK rock, a call to smash authority and treat the body as a tribal battlefield, ended up smacking itself in the face. It left the larger world unmoved. It didn't topple Margaret Thatcher, excite revolution in the streets, or rid the music world of false gods, despite the Clash's declaring "No Elvis, Beatles, or Rolling Stones!" in their song "1977." But, as T. S. Eliot observed, there are no lost causes, because there are no won causes; and the nasty scrawl that punk made in the seventies has thickened into a jungle of intellectual graffiti. Punk has its own library, in which the Sex Pistols have their own section. The British journalist Jon Savage strove to play Thomas Carlyle with "England's Dreaming: Anarchy, Sex Pistols, Punk Rock, and Beyond," an apocalyptic political overview of that sweaty phase. (Sample sentence: " 'Punk didn't do much to challenge male sexuality or image,' says Lucy Toothpaste, whose fanzine *Jolt* explicitly dealt with feminist ideas.") Even more exhaustive was Greil Marcus's "Lipstick Traces," which featured Johnny Rotten on the cover of the paperback version and read like a garbled radio broadcast from a catacomb of rival sects. Malcolm McLaren was the subject of a biography, and Glen Matlock published a memoir, as did Nancy Spungen's mother. The American tour was given documentary-like treatment in "12 Days on the Road," the definitive account of trying to keep Sid on the bus. Now Rotten himself, never known for his reticence, has decided to set the record straight and get in some additional licks. In "Rotten: No Irish, No Blacks, No dogs," a book riddled with misspellings and repetitions yet alive at the core, John Lydon (with the assistance of Keith and Kent Zimmerman, and with additional testimonies by, among others, Chrissie Hynde and Billy Idol) revels in his role as irritant and scourge. "We were very good at being sarcastic," he says of his fellow Sex Pistols, "and I think my qualities in this area can speak for themselves." They do. He's quite the humorist.

In all the furor over punk at the time, and in all the effort to read significance into it since, we have often overlooked how funny-awful the whole thing was. One needed a face of stone not to laugh at rockers calling themselves Rotten, Vicious, Rat Scabies, Cheetah Chrome, Richard Hell, and Poly Styrene, or at bands with names like the Slits, the Cramps, the Sic F*cks. Or at the provocations of punk fashion, which had pale young poseurs looking like crashed U.F.O.s, bondage queens, and Iroquois warriors. The magazine *Punk*, created in New York in 1975 by John Holmstrom and Legs McNeil, captured the slapstick spirit of the period, with its pasteups of cartoons, photographs, and inane interviews. (The first *Punk* Q. & A., with Lou Reed, was a classic.) Comedy is an antiheroic device, a deflater of hopes and assumptions. And, as Lydon says in "Rotten," what made the Pistols a great band is that they were the most antiheroic of all. They flunked every crunch test. "I really do think the crown and glory of the Sex Pistols is that we've always managed to disappoint on big occasions. When the chips were down, we never came through. We were so bad, it was gloriously awful." (This opinion is echoed by Savage in "England's Dreaming." As he puts it, "the Sex Pistols did what they always did when they were under intense scrutiny: they stank.") And, when it came to not coming through, Sid Vicious was a true champion. He was the opposite of a natural performer. He was an unnatural performer. He couldn't sing, he couldn't play, he could barely stand. It took him forever simply to learn how to dress the part of a punk.

"Sid was an absolute fashion victim—the worst I'd ever known," Lydon recollects. "He'd wear sandals in the snow with no socks when he wanted to show off his toenail varnish." He'd try bits of Rotten's gear, to no better effect. "I was rushed to the hospital after a gig in Walthamstow supporting Kilburn and the High Roads because I foolishly walked on stage in a rubber T-shirt. Three songs in, I collapsed, and then it was oxygen tent time. I ended up selling what was left of that same shirt to Sid, and precisely the same thing happened to him. Midsummer madness. The fool walked outside, and it was eighty-five degrees. Fashion-first Sid. He collapsed." Sid never quite found the knack. At one point, Lydon had agreed to marry Chrissie Hynde, the moody-lipped lead singer of the Pretenders, only to chicken out before the ceremony. Sid went instead. "She wouldn't have him," Lydon claims. "He was so filthy, Sidney did not believe in washing at the time. This was his antifashion period. He'd gone the other way from the prissy nail varnish to total hound-dog of the first degree. Really bad but with a punk hairdo. Chrissie took one look at that and wouldn't have it!"

Lydon might have played Butt-head to Vicious's Beavis indefinitely if Vicious had not impaled himself on the fingernails of the punk groupie Nancy Spungen. Seldom has a person been so aptly named. Money, drugs, cosmetics: Spungen sponged off everyone, since she couldn't get paid for her true talent—whining. "When she started up with that incessant whining she was more than the human mind could bear," Chrissie Hynde recalls in "Rotten." Like many members of the punk scene, Spungen behaved like an Andy Warhol superstar, creating phony hysteria around her during the wait between fixes. Lydon says, "Sid's idea of fun at the time was taking drugs with Nancy. My idea



of fun was taking drugs with anyone but her, and the two didn't tarry well." Fun is fun, but for Sid and Nancy it became fatal. I've always thought that hard-core addiction is a kind of negative nurturing—an attempt to mother oneself, to reënact the dreamy dependency of being a newborn attached to a feeding machine. The needle functions as a sharp nipple, and with each injection the junkie breast-feeds himself, seeking a sustenance that eventually sickens. Sid and Nancy's crash pad at the Chelsea Hotel became a squalid playpen as they took turns at the crystal tit. Their antics, like scenes from a Warhol film, became a skit that went on too long. Like all junkies, they had to work harder and harder at pretending to be alive. Lydon considers the Alex Cox movie "Sid and Nancy," which starred Gary Oldman and Chloe Webb, a glorification of their last, gutted days. "To me this movie is the lowest form of life. I honestly believe that it celebrates heroin addiction. It definitely glorifies it in the end when that stupid taxi drives off into the sky. That's such nonsense." But, when most people think of punk, Sid and Nancy is what they picture.

It's a shame. If you listen to the Sex Pistols now, it's amazing how usurping they still sound. The subjects of the songs may have dated ("God Save the Queen," the infamous anti-Jubilee anthem; "E.M.I.," an attack on their former record company), but the door-slam rudeness remains. Lydon's singing supplies the driving lash. One publicity shot had him posing in a straitjacket, and his vocals were an urgent catcall, a burst of Adam's apple, as if he couldn't reach the source of the rash eating him alive. (He's still a bundle of raw nerves. "I'm claustrophobic," he confesses in "Rotten." "I can't ride in subways, and I don't like heights. I'm epileptic as well, but I'm not on any medication. Strobe lights really set me off, also afternoon sun between the trees as you drive along in the car. I can't take that constant flash.") With a stage persona that he has likened to Richard III, wringing wiry changes from his one-note harangues, Lydon belonged to that line of ranters stretching from the poet Richard Savage to Jimmy Porter in "Look Back in Anger." His psychodramatic highs included "Holidays in the Sun," with its crunchy marching feet and paranoid babble, and a cover of the Stooges' "No Fun," in which he sounds as if he were singing from the scaffold, fashioning his own noose.

After the Pistols disbanded, he junked Rotten, reverted to his real name, and formed a group called Public Image, Limited—PiL for short. His monochromatic effects acquired a dark lacquer: the foreground percussion on the album "Flowers of Romance" propels an Islamic prayer chant. PiL's masterwork, "Metal Box," is a three-record set in which Lydon languishes in the soul of a dead machine. Heavy bass lines thread through a profitless land. It's an art movie on vinyl, only Lydon is too ornery to settle for anomie. He manages to whip isolation, weariness, and leftover mockery into a stay against suicide, an affirmative shrug. A song called "Death Disco," which borrows a melody line from "Swan Lake," ends with his most passionate utterance: "Seeing in your eyes / I'm seeing through my eyes / — Words cannot express, words cannot express . . ."

"Death Disco" was written by Lydon for his mother, who died of cancer in 1979. As if to show that Lydon isn't a complete ferret, the penultimate chapter of "Rotten" features Lydon's father testifying to his son's filial devotion: "Johnny sat with his mum all through her illness. He sat by her side for ten weeks—never spoke to anybody—never left her day or night. He washed in the hospital, slept on the seat. He was that close to her." It was a watch that Lydon now wishes he had kept on Sid. "I could have helped Sid more," he reflects. "If only I hadn't been lazy and washed my hands of him like Pontius Pilate. That's something I'll have to carry to the grave with me. I don't know what I could have done, but I know I should have done something. There are always ways. You must never be lazy when it comes to your friends."

A flicker of humanity! An expression of remorse! It's not a sympathy that extends very far—annoyed, during his book tour, at being asked so many questions about Kurt Cobain's suicide, Lydon finally snapped, "I don't give a fuck about Kurt Cobain"—but, after all the cut marks of wit and ego found in "Rotten," this admission counts as an emotional breakthrough. He risks sounding corny—and that, for a master of ridicule like Lydon, is no small risk. If I didn't admire him so much, I might accuse him of maturity. ♦

Philip Levine

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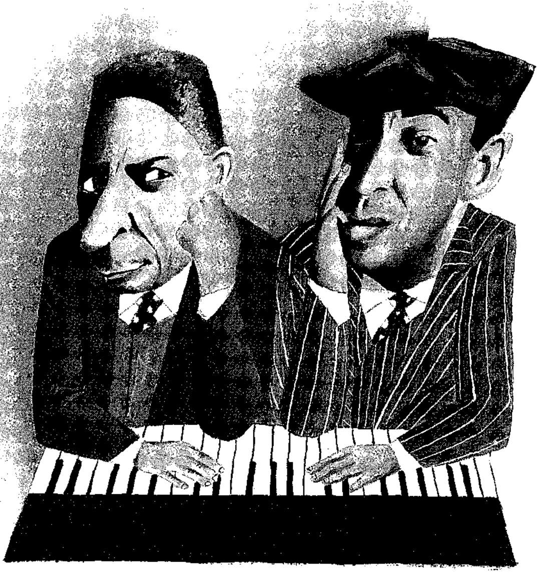
JAZZ

MR. JELLY LORD RETURNS

BY WHITNEY BALLIETT

SEVERAL months into the run of "Jelly's Last Jam," the musical based on the life of Jelly Roll Morton, a funny and exhilarating rival two-man Morton show appeared across town at Michael's Pub, and it ran for five months. A kind of antidote to the Broadway show, which trashed Morton's music and made him into a racist monster, it was barely an hour long and was based closely on the musical autobiography that Morton recorded at the Library of Congress, in 1938. Now, a year later, the show has reappeared at the Pub in expanded form for an open-ended run, and it again includes the brilliant, elusive Vernel Bagneris, who plays Morton, and the virtuoso Norwegian pianist Morten Gunnar Larsen, who plays Morton's music, note for glorious note.



Vernel Bagneris (right) reprises his role as Jelly Roll Morton in "Hoo-Dude."

MARK ULRIKSEN

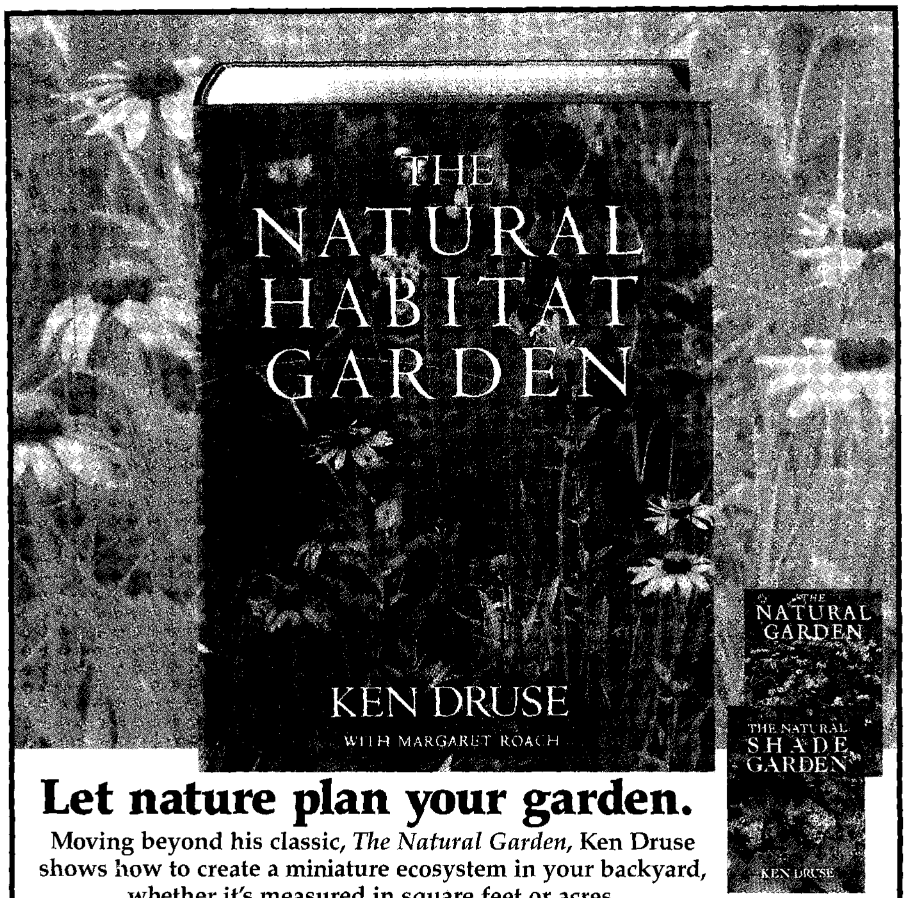
Bagneris, at forty-four, is a classic anti-star—subtle, organically grown, more or less directionless, childlike, generous, and still surprised at his talents. (He was born in New Orleans, where pronunciations are often inscrutable. His surname is pronounced Bahnereez, accent on the first syllable.) In the past fifteen years, he has written four funny comedies with music, all of them close studies of various kinds of black lowlife. They include "One Mo' Time," set in a vaudeville theatre in New Orleans in 1926, and "Further Mo'," a sequel; "Staggerlee," a rhythm-and-blues musical that takes place in a small Southern town in the fifties; and "Hoo-Dude," his current Morton show. "One Mo' Time" opened at the Village Gate in 1979 and ran for three and a half years, spawning seven worldwide road companies, one of which played a year and a half in London. "Further Mo' " opened at the Gate in May of 1990 but lasted only five and a half months. ("It got better reviews than 'One Mo',' " Bagneris said recently. "But then the Gulf War thing broke out, and it went down the drain. In two weeks, the box-office fell from eighty per cent to twenty. There was no touring company. Nothing. It broke my heart.") "Staggerlee" ran six months at the Second Avenue Theatre, and helped bring Ruth Brown, then an out-of-fashion rhythm-and-blues singer, back into view, which led to her starring role on Broadway in "Black and Blue."

Bagneris is a one-man band. He not only writes his shows but often directs them, acts in them, sings in them, and dances in them. He moves from craft to craft with New Orleans ease, never allowing one to outweigh another. He also takes occasional side trips into other people's worlds—notably as the mournful Accordion Man in the 1981 movie version of Dennis Potter's "Pennies from Heaven," and as the African-American writer Jean Toomer in the recent PBS drama "A Marriage: Georgia O'Keeffe and Alfred Stieglitz."

First-rate talents often sprout from tangled roots. Bagneris is an exception. He has a loving, orderly family, he went to good schools, and, with the help of various grants, he attended Xavier University. After graduation, he taught English briefly in a high school, and then, impatient, began shuttling back and forth, money permitting, between New Orleans and the Mickery Theatre, in Amsterdam. There he absorbed the acting techniques of the Polish director and teacher Jerzy Grotowski. "He was somewhat like Stanislavsky in that he taught you how to build a character from inside yourself instead of just fabricating it," Bagneris has said. When he returned to New Orleans for good, in the early seventies, he founded the New Experience Players. It was the first integrated theatrical company in New Orleans, and it introduced Ionesco, Beckett, and Albee.

Bagneris was born on July 31, 1949. He was named after his first cousin the New Orleans drummer Vernel Fournier. His father's father, Nemour Bagneris, was from Hispaniola, and he jumped ship in New Orleans sometime around 1900. "He had black blood and blue eyes," Bagneris said recently, "but he fit into the Creole community—the Creoles of color, as they used to be called. He married a white Frenchwoman, whose husband, also white, had died. She already had three children, and they had eight more, one of them my father. When he was growing up, he thought the oldest children were passing for white, and he hated them for it. Then he found out they *were* white. It cured him of making racial distinctions. My mother, Gloria Diaz, was born in New Orleans. Her family had been there forever.

"I was raised in the old Lafitte housing project, which was built by Huey Long. It's a drug-infested ghetto now, but it was a nice place then, full of poor people raising families. When I was still little, we moved to the first of several two-family houses in the Seventh Ward. It was known as the back o' town, and it was all Creole families and musicians. It didn't matter what your background was—it might be Spanish or Mexican or Italian or Moroccan. We were all people of color, people who couldn't be white. It was a giving society. If somebody



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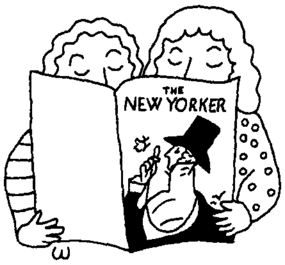

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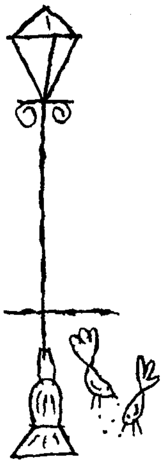
went fishing, he'd dump a shitload of crabs and fish on your stoop. Or if somebody bought a cow he'd give you a slab of beef. My father worked in the post office for thirty years, and he waited on table. He also worked the balls during Mardi Gras, helping people into their costumes. I did that, too, when I was old enough. You'd make twenty-five or thirty dollars in tips. My father never let my mother work, so her energy went into housekeeping. She was a fantastic housekeeper. You'd go to the bathroom in the middle of the night, and when you came back your bed would be made."

In 1978, Bagneris put together an improvised piece that had to do with jazz and black vaudeville in the twenties. He asked his grandmother how black performers talked at the time, and he studied collections of vaudeville jokes and "coon" jokes. The Swedish clarinetist Orange Kellin, who lived in New Orleans, helped him dig up a couple of dozen vaudeville songs and blues, among them heavy double-entendres like "Kitchen Man" and "The Right Key but the Wrong Keyhole." He wrote a script and got hold of three black singers—Topsy Chapman, Thais Clark, and Sylvia (Kuumba) Williams. The production, called "One Mo' Time," was set in a time when the blues singers Bessie Smith and Ma Rainey were big stars on the T.O.B.A. circuit (the Theatre Owners' Booking Association, better known among black performers as Tough on Black Asses), and it deals with one night at the Lyric Theatre in New Orleans. Big Bertha Williams and Her Touring Company, several notches below Smith and Rainey, are on the bill, and we watch them footing it onstage and carrying on backstage. Ma Reed, one of two enormous singers in the troupe, talks backstage with Papa Du (Bagneris), the group's manager:



Ma Reed: Speakin of hotels, we got one don't we?

Papa Du: Well, not exactly.

Ma Reed: Not exactly?

Papa Du: Now look here Ma. I asked the man at the desk about the rates. He said it was five dollars for the first floor, four dollars for the second floor, and three dollars for the third floor. I was turnin to leave, he said "What's the matter, aren't our rates alright?" I said "Your rates is fine, your hotel just ain't high enough."

Ma Reed: Well, how come we always got to stay in places where hot an cold water means hot in the summer and cold in the winter? (*Laughs*)

Papa Du: Now, Ma, if you'd just quit all this singin' and dancin' routine and go git yourself married.

Ma Reed: Married? Oh no honey, not me.

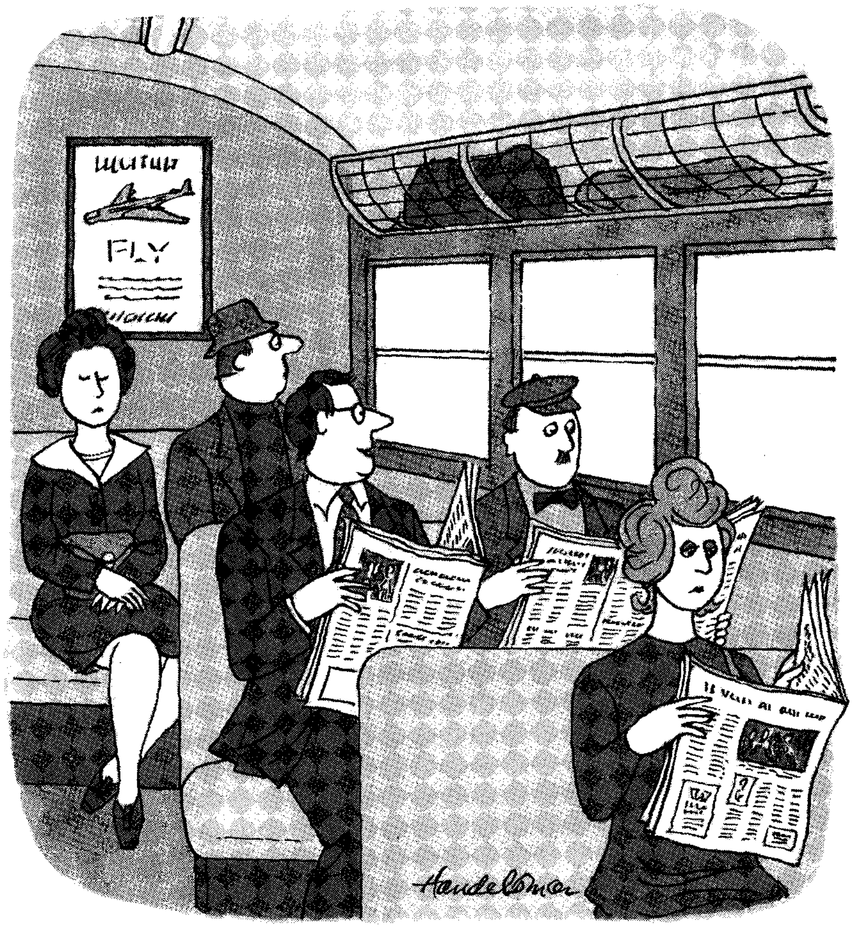
Papa Du: And why not?

Ma Reed: Cause nobody don't want to marry me when I'm drunk an I sure as hell don't want to marry nobody when I'm sober. (*Laughs*)

"One Mo' Time" had been running for six months in New Orleans when Bagneris's friend Carl Colby asked him one night why he didn't *do* something with the show, and Bagneris said he thought he *was* doing something. Colby said he'd invite Jerry Wexler, the record producer, and Art D'Lugoff, the owner of the Village Gate, down from New York to see the show. It was already quite famous; nobody passing through missed it. On the night Wexler and D'Lugoff came, Odetta and Allen Ginsberg were in the audience, and so was James Baldwin. Eubie Blake had been there two nights before, and Tennessee Williams saw it five times. Wexler and D'Lugoff liked "One Mo' Time" so much that they took it to New York, and it opened at the Gate in October of 1979.

"My Morton show began to take shape in 1984—*before* 'Jelly's Last Jam,' in fact," Bagneris said the other day. "I have a whole history with Morton. In 1976, I played him in a raunchy movie called 'French Quarter,' which became a big drive-in hit. A year later, Louis Malle asked me to play Jelly in his 'Pretty Baby.' I was signed and ready and walking around the set with Malle when he heard about 'French Quarter.' The Paramount people panicked, and I was out. Morten Larsen and I had been fooling around with a Morton piece based on the Library of Congress recordings, and I wrote something and brought it to New York for a workshop, using Terry Waldo on piano. I invited Wexler and D'Lugoff and a few other people. Then I went to Martinique to dig their beguine music, which resembles our Creole music—what Jelly called the Spanish tinge. When I got back, I found that the word was out. The producer Pam Koslow had announced they were going to do a musical based on the life of Jelly Roll Morton, and that it would star Gregory Hines. The next I knew, Koslow called me in New Orleans and asked me if I'd like to write the book. I told her where I was coming from about Morton, and she said 'Can you write a tap ballet?' I said I wouldn't know how to write a tap ballet, and she said, 'Well, some kind of dance expression.' I said I wouldn't know how to do that, either, and pretty soon I heard they were talking to Samm-Art Williams. I was working on 'Staggerlee' by this time, and maybe a month later Margo Lion, another producer of the New York Jelly show, called and asked again if I'd be interested in being involved with the show. I said, No, I was at work on 'Staggerlee,' and she said, 'Can't you postpone it?' and I said no. Of course, what they were doing in New York eventually became 'Jelly's Last Jam.' Before Morten Larsen and I opened at Michael's Pub, I told George Wolfe, the director, out of courtesy, that I was going to do my little show at the Pub, that it didn't have anything to do with his show, and he thanked me for telling him. One night, near the end of our run, the whole cast of 'Jelly's Last Jam' came to the Pub to see the show. They loved it, and they were amazed at what Jelly was really like. George didn't come. By this time, Jelly's fans, who are very partisan, had made a lot of angry noise about George making him into a mean racist, and maybe he had got that mixed up in his mind with my show. I don't know."

Bagneris works on a no-frills set at Michael's Pub. The stage, placed against the rear wall of the room, is a low, shallow platform about twenty feet long and covered with a carpet and a Persian rug. At stage right are an armchair, a side table, and a standing lamp, and at stage left is Morten Gunnar Larsen's grand piano. The piano is covered with a genteel fringed crewelwork shawl. There is a candelabra on top of the shawl and a tall standing candleholder at the edge of stage left. On the wall at the rear of center stage is a large photograph of Morton, standing in profile in a suit and cap, possibly taken during his early palmy days in California, circa 1917. A coatrack and a high stool complete the trappings at center stage. The time is 1941, the year of Morton's death. Larsen opens the show with Morton's "Perfect Rag," and the music—historic, filigreed, still swinging—casts an immediate spell. Larsen goes into the slow and beautiful "Mamie's Blues," and Bagneris's voice, sounding distant and lighter than Morton's, is heard coming from the back of the room: "As I can understand it, my folks were from the city of New Orleans long before the Louisiana Purchase. And all my folks came directly from the shores of France. We are Creoles, now that's a group of people that had come to New Orleans from France or Spain and had mixed with the native American Indians or the Negro-blooded locals that had come to the city from places like Haiti, Martinique, Santo Domingo, and so forth and so on." While he talks, Bagneris moves slowly though the house and onto the stage. He is wearing a sharp royal-blue chalk-stripe suit and vest, with watch chain, and an oversized cap. He looks exactly like Morton. Larsen plays a fragment of "Il Trovatore" straight, then jazzes it, after Bagneris—already Morton himself—tells us how he "transformed a lot of these kinds of numbers into jazz timings with different little ideas and variations in them." Bagneris sings Morton's funny, self-celebrating "Mr. Jelly Lord" ("You should see him strolling down the street / The man's an angel, with great big feet") and a marvellous blues about a murderer named Aaron Harris. (Morton may well have been the first jazz singer, starting even earlier than Louis Armstrong, and he had a moving, plaintive voice; Bagneris makes it sound as it probably did when Morton was young.) Another self-congratulatory Morton song, "Jelly Roll Blues" ("He's so tall, so chancy, he's a lady's fancy / Everybody knows him certainly do adore him"), follows, and Bagneris slips into the first of half a dozen dances that he does during the show. Supervised by Pepsi Bethel, a dance teacher who was in New York in the early forties, during the heyday of the Savoy Ballroom, Bagneris's dances are a flawless flow of bits and pieces from the chicken, the shimmy, the eagle rock, the jig walk, the Suzie-Q, and the Shorty George. Unlike Gregory Hines's dancing in "Jelly's Last Jam," which, though superb, had nothing to do with Morton, Bagneris's dances—all elbows and bent knees and sinuous spins—have the strange effect of making Morton's music almost visible.



"Don't you feel a lot safer now that crime is illegal?"

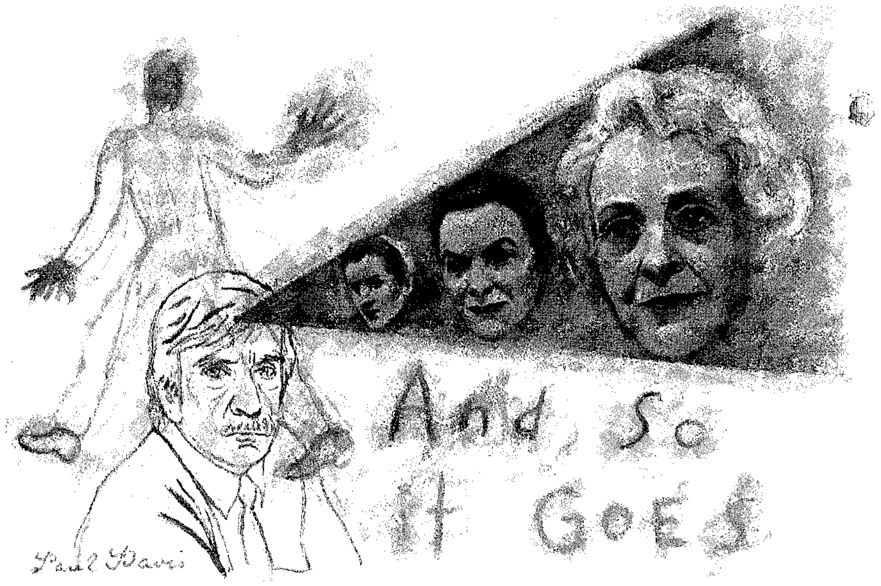
By now, it is clear that Bagneris is one of those musical-comedy performers whom you get to see only two or three times in your life. Slender, compact, and boneless, with arched eyebrows, beautiful ears, and a lighthouse smile, Bagneris is laid-back, effortless, and swinging. When he sings, he recalls Fred Astaire, and when he dances, his feet—in the lingo of Honi Coles praising Bill Robinson—never touch the ground. He has the choice, indescribable ability to make you want to see him over and over again—and to see him each time with no lessening of delight.

One night a week or so ago, Bagneris closed his show, as usual, with Morton's mournful song "Sweet Substitute" and followed it with a rousing reprise of the chorus of "Jelly Roll Blues." Then he sat down at a table and laughed for a while. (His laughter, soft and Southern, constantly lights his talk.) "I suppose that one of the reasons I'm drawn to Morton is that he never let his color get in his way," he said. "His mouth did, but not his Creole background. I don't know how many auditions I've done only to find that I was either too light for a part or too dark. You think sometimes that every drop of black blood you have is a drop of poison, even if it's just one-thirty-second of you. Anyway, I know who I am, and I only want to be famous if it means I can truly do what I want to do. Which at the moment is turning Langston Hughes's 1935 play, 'Little Ham,' into a musical. I've written the book, and I know who's going to do the music. This time, I might be Broadway-bound. But if something does happen, if it becomes huge, I'll step out of it and only direct. You need to be on the outside looking in in a situation like that. In New Orleans, once you put your head above water and make a little success, you're always up there. You don't have to keep succeeding. They love you for what you've already done." ♦

THE THEATRE

SONS AND MOTHERS

BY JOHN LAHR



In "Three Tall Women," Edward Albee calls it quits with the past.

FOR one terrible moment at the beginning of "Three Tall Women," the pretension that has sunk so many of Edward Albee's theatrical vehicles in his middle years looms menacingly on the horizon. "It's downhill from sixteen on," says one of the women, a middle-aged character called B, who takes care of a rich, imperious, senile old bird called A and is herself a connoisseur of collapse. She goes on, "I'd like to see children learn it—have a six-year-old say 'I'm dying' and know what it means." But then, as we and the old lady settle into the demented fog of her remembering and forgetting, it becomes apparent that Albee has found his way back to the sour and passionate straight talking of his early, best plays.

The last great gift a parent gives to a child is his or her own death, and the energy underneath "Three Tall Women" is the exhilaration of a writer calling it quits with the past—specifically, the rueful standoff between Albee and his mother, the late Frances Cotter Albee, who adopted him only to kick him out of the family home, at eighteen, for his homosexual shenanigans and later to cut him out of her sizable will. The play has earned Albee, who is sixty-six, his third (and most deserved) Pulitzer Prize, but the writer's real victory is a psychological one—honoring the ambiguity of "the long unpleasant life she led" while keeping her memory vividly alive. Far from being an act of revenge or special pleading, the play is a wary act of reconciliation, whose pathos and poetry are a testament to the bond, however attenuated, between child and parent. "Three Tall Women" bears witness to the son's sad wish to be loved, but with this liberating difference: the child is now finally in control of the parent's destiny, instead of the parent's being in control of the child's. Here, in a set whose Empire furniture, mahogany parquet, flocked blue bedroom wallpaper, and resplendent silver tea service emphasize the iconography of privilege, and not the clutter of decline, sits the ninety-two-year-old A, a fragile, white-haired replica of Albee's mother. A is a spoiled, petulant, demanding, bigoted, manipulative old bat. "*I'll* fix him" she says of her absent son, her quicksilver emotions veering suddenly from tears to a hatred that includes B and a twenty-something female lawyer, C. "I'll fix *all* of 'em. They all think they can treat me like this. You all think you can get away with anything." A's transparent impotence makes the once horrible hectoring now merely laughable. But she is still a potent

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amalgam of dyspepsia and decrepitude. A former beauty (Albee's mother was briefly a model), A was protected first by the fortune of a face and then by a fortune. Her narcissism and her isolation are spectacular. "You take people as friends and you spend time at it, you put effort in, and it doesn't matter if you don't like them anymore—who likes anybody anymore?—you've put in all that time, and what right do they have to . . . to . . ." she says, her thoughts, like her life, evaporating disconcertingly before her eyes.

Act I paints the landscape of A's old age—the humiliations of incontinence, memory loss, confusion, and regret—and is dominated by the huge, heroic performance of Myra Carter. Ms. Carter, who is sixty-four and is new to me, gives one of the finest performances I've ever seen on the New York stage—an enormous feat of memory, energy, and observation. "I've shrunk!" she says, overwhelmed by the confusions, real and imagined, that beset her. "I'm not tall! I used to be so tall! Why have I shrunk?" Carter hits every vowel and consonant of Albee's words, filling each one with lucid thought and wonderful music. She growls, squawks, cackles, whimpers, rages through the torrent of emotion and memory that's called out of her by the two interlocutors. A's life turns out to have been a series of punishing losses: a sister who became a drunk; a mother who, when she moved into her daughter's home, became an enemy; a son who became a stranger; a husband who became first a philanderer and then a victim of cancer. Carter's face is still beautiful, and it lights up intermittently with childlike delight, even sweetness, which reminds us of the charm that A's former good looks exerted on the world, and mitigates the emptiness of the frivolous life she describes. "I was . . . well, I was naked; I didn't have a stitch, except I had on all my jewelry. I hadn't taken off my jewelry," A says, giggling, about a crucial episode of her early marriage, when "his peepee was all hard, and . . . and hanging on it was a new bracelet." Her husband wants a sexual favor that the well-mannered A can't and won't perform. She continues, "Well, it started to go soft, and the bracelet slid off, and it fell into my lap. I was naked; deep into my lap. 'Keep it,' he said and he turned and he walked out of my dressing room." She weeps at the memory, which sounds the first note of her husband's emotional retreat.

The ballast to A's dementia is provided by B, the droll and delightful Marian Seldes, who moves like a slow loris around the stage, her shoulders hunched as if lumbered with the weight of both her own and A's boredom with old age. "And so it goes" is her recurring catchphrase, which announces the giddy zone of resignation and detachment that she inhabits. "In the morning, when she wakes up she wets—a kind of greeting to the day, I suppose," she tells C, translating her irritation into little dollops of snideness to make it bearable. "The sphincter and the cortex not in synch. Never during the *night*, but *as* she wakes." B exists to register the old woman's existential anguish; and the inflexible C is there to broadcast moral horror. Albee is less successful with C, who is meant to be callow but—in the first act, at least—is just a poorly written prig. A lawyer sorting out A's unpaid bills, C (played by Jordan Baker) behaves more like an intemperate and insensitive teen-ager than like an employee. A, who is full of antique phrases like "Don't you get fresh," is also full of the ancient bigotries of her class. These draw implausible reactions from C. A's recollection of Irving Thalberg as "a real smart little Jew" prompts C's dopey outrage: "I'm a democrat." And, later, when A talks about "colored help" knowing their place ("none of those uppity niggers, the city ones"), C explodes in dismay, "Oh, Jesus Christ!" Her tone soon becomes predictable, and the character loses a purchase on the audience's imagination, which is focussed on A and on what she sees, at the end of Act I, as her inheritance of hate. "I think they all hated me, because I was strong, because I *had* to be," A says, rationalizing her self-involvement. "Sis hated me; Ma hated me; all those others, *they* hated me." She goes strangely silent after the speech. And Albee brings the curtain down with B and C realizing that their employer has had a stroke.

In Act II, by an ingenious coup de théâtre, "Three Tall Women" expands from a parental cameo to a vista of decline. At curtain rise, A is still collapsed in bed but now has an oxygen mask over her face. B and C seem to have dressed up for their bedside vigil in period high fashion—B in pearls and an elegant gray frock with a full, pleated fifties skirt, and C in a layered ankle-length cream chiffon dress that evokes the twenties. Then, as

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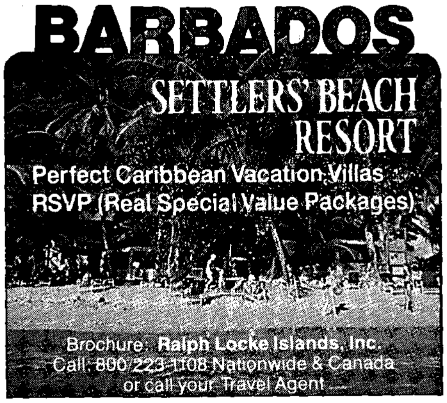
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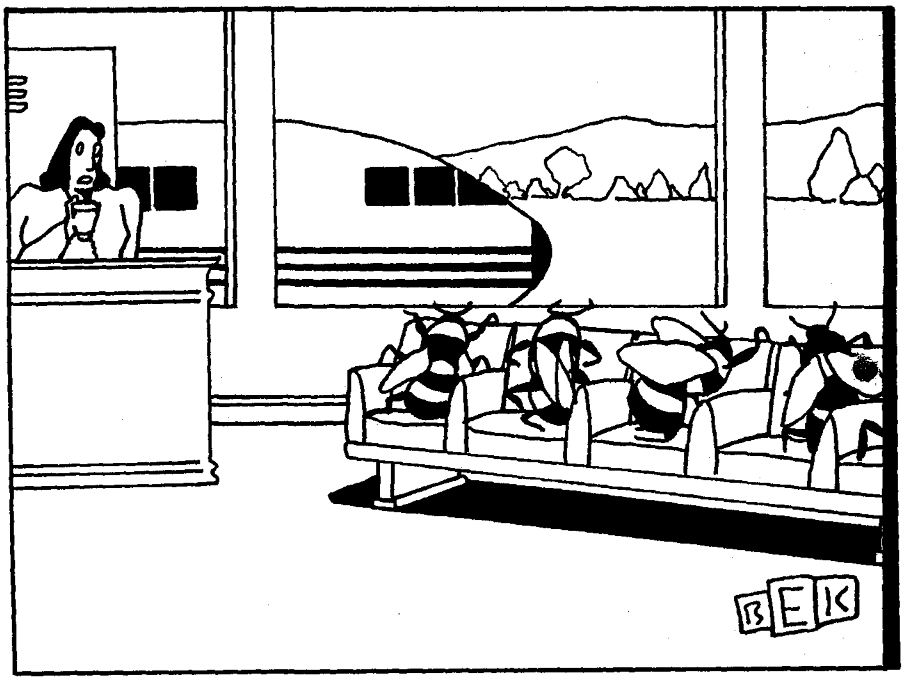
B and C bicker about death, and the conversation drifts to the absence of a living will and why A didn't write one, A herself, in an elegant lavender dress, walks in from the wings. "I was going to but then I forgot, or it slipped my mind, or something," she says. The moment is electrifying. The body in the bed turns out to be a mannequin. In this theatrical filip, Albee goes from a familiar external reality to a bold interior one. B and C are now projections of A, who speaks rationally for the duration of the play, responding from different stages of her life. Albee's wonderful invention allows him both to incarnate A's narcissism and to lift the play from characterization to meditation. What we get is a kind of Cubist stage picture, where the characters are fragments of a single self. The device is at its most eloquent when the son appears, in preppy clothes and clasping freesias, to sit by his comatose mother in a dumb show of devotion. The characters circle him:

C (*Wonder*): I have children?
B (*None too pleasant*): We have one; we have a boy.
A (*Same*): Yes, we do. I have a son.
B (*Seeing him, sneering*): Well, fancy seeing you again. (*Sudden, and enraged, into his face*) Get out of my house!

In this terrifying and terrible moment, the son doesn't react. In fact, he never speaks. B, the voice the son heard when he was growing up, berates him as "filthy," but A, from the distance of her dotage, begs for tolerance. "He came back; he never loved me, he never loved us, but he came back. Let him alone," she says, adding later, "Twenty-plus years? That's a long enough sulk—on both sides." Lawrence Sacharow, the director, stages these lines impeccably and with awful authenticity. The boy's muteness is a metaphor for the inconsolable gap between parent and child. It's also another of Albee's brilliant dramatic maneuvers: the child is forever outside the narcissistic parental embrace—seen but not heard.

The son's leave-taking ("He packed up his attitudes and he *left*," B says) is just one of a litany of losses that A and her former selves pick over in this fugue of hope and hurt. Inevitably, the play becomes a dance of A's defensiveness, as her psyche struggles to idealize itself. "I . . . will . . . not . . . become . . . you. I will *not*. I . . . I deny *you*," C says to A, who, in turn, is unrepentant and rejects their versions of life: "I'm *here*, and I deny you *all*; I deny every *one* of you." In this landscape of loneliness and heartache, C, at the finale, asks about the happy times. "I *know* my best times—what is it? happiest?—haven't happened yet. They're to *come*," she says. "Aren't they? Please?" B can't agree, preferring her own middle age: "It's the only time you get a three-hundred-and-sixty-degree view—see in all directions. Wow! What a view!" But A has the final say, which is pitched, sar-



"I'm sorry, but the flight of the bumblebees has been cancelled."

donically, like the happy ending of a Restoration play, with the characters joining hands to face the audience. With B and C on either side of her, A speaks her notion of the happiest moment in life. "When we stop. When we can stop," she says, and, as they together breathe and exhale for the last time, the lights fade to black. At the beginning of this gorgeous final speech, A catches herself lying about her age—a sweet vanity that Albee pays off with a joke. "Give a girl a break," she says to B. And that, finally, is what Albee's "Three Tall Women" does for his mother. The mute young man in the play can now, in his own middle age, give her the gift of his words, and make something beautiful and enduring about both her privilege and her neglect.

J. B. PRIESTLEY wrote "An Inspector Calls" in 1945, to sell the idea of the welfare state to the British public; in 1992, Stephen Daldry restaged the play at the Royal National Theatre, to sell the idea of *himself* to the British public. Daldry, a young and indubitably gifted director, has, at great expense, added the starving masses to Priestley's cast list and has endowed the play with Ian MacNeil's extraordinary set, thereby turning its landscape into an apocalyptic capitalist no man's land, where the poor skitter around the doll's house on the hill like so many rats among garbage. "An Inspector Calls" is not really a play—it's a speech. The message is community, the link of every man to every other. Inspector Goole, here played by the marvellous Kenneth Cranham—who has to work hard, in a stylized performance, to make an American audience swallow the play's socialist assumptions—always knows the answers. He's the superego in a pin-striped suit. As a result, there is no mystery, only explanation; there is no drama, only speechifying. A fine cast, including the impressive Philip Bosco and the fetching Jane Adams, have ideas, not actions, to play. The result is a weird kind of near-vacuum, containing only the author's hot air and the performers' histrionics. Daldry's production is glib but not probing: the substance and the style are at odds. The theme may be the sin of separation of rich from poor, but the production goes to spectacular lengths to stand out. It has been ballyhooed to the skies, but, as Dr. Johnson said of another strained poetic vision, it is tall by walking on tiptoe. ♦

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THE CURRENT CINEMA

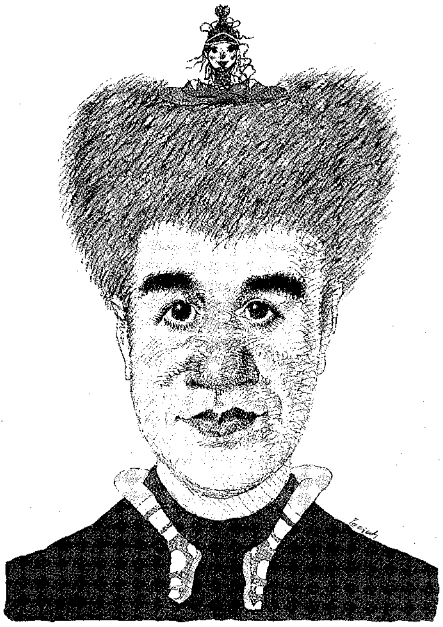
SHOCK TREATMENT

BY ANTHONY LANE

"HAVE you ever done it with a man?" "No, just my brother." Yes, it's another movie from Pedro Almodóvar. The new one, "Kika," is fully furnished with all his old talismans and trappings: all the trash décor, the homely hysteria, and the cleavages you could park a bicycle in. The plot, too, is the usual cocktail: three parts Feydeau to one part porn, carefully swirled around until you can't be bothered to keep up with it. When the words "Three years later" come up onscreen, followed almost immediately by a flashback, you start to stretch your brain around the chronology, then realize that Almodóvar doesn't want you to succeed; he's laughing at you for even making the effort. Everything about this movie lines up to be sacrificed on the altar of style, and the bloody flourish of the ceremony is the only thing that matters.

Kika sounds like a chain of seventies fashion boutiques; in fact, it's the name of the heroine (Verónica Forqué), who dresses as if she *owned* a chain of seventies fashion boutiques. I was particularly taken with her combination of pink dress, scarlet headband, and magenta drop earrings; as the film goes on, and a succession of men try to chew and lick various portions of her, you wonder if she was well advised to model her wardrobe on a bag of boiled sweets. Almodóvar is the last of the Fauves; his moral outrages are starting to look thin and sour, but his camera continues to shock, smacking us in the eyes with sharp, shrieking hues. The opening sequence of "Kika" glows with pools of orange-red—a car, a jacket, the flash of a truck in a side-view mirror—as if the whole of Spain had just been splashed with tomato soup.

Kika is a makeup artist by trade, living in unmarried bliss with Ramón (Alex Casanovas); they meet when she comes to doll up his cold corpse for the undertaker. One touch of her loving rouge, and he flickers back to life; later on, she pulls the same stunt by jamming his toe in a lamp socket. Ramón has the luck of a Lazarus, but that's nothing new; Almodóvar's creatures have always prided themselves on recovering from violence as if it were a bout of the flu. They go through hell and come out smiling on the other side. "Kika" ups the odds by *starting* with a death: we hear the crack of a pistol shot, then Ramón cries "Mother!" and runs to find the body, pulling aside the silk blouse to expose the wound on her breast. Almodóvar might as well put up a signpost saying "Welcome to Douglas Sirk Country"; he has never concealed his reverence for fifties melodrama, for the sight of all those high-strung beauties lurching from one emotional hurdle to the next. "Kika" is packed with lines like "Tie me up and punch me," "I'm no longer a psychologist," and—a real go[illegible]en oldie—"When will this nightmare end?" The characters are direct descendants of the Sirk clan, given more explicit leeway in the brandishing of their desires but steeped in the same kind of freaky, Freudish existence: Ramón is devoted to his mother's memory, while his stepfather, an American writer called Nicholas (Peter Coyote), is not quite grief-stricken enough, and soon looks elsewhere. With his lust-sickened air and cadaverous good



Pedro Almodóvar: The last of the Fauves.

looks, and with "Bitter Moon" and "A Man in Love" already behind him, Coyote is obviously set on becoming an all-purpose Euro-lecher.

Nicholas comes to Madrid and rents a room from Ramón and Kika. She is feeling sexually shortchanged, so from time to time she nips upstairs and asks Nicholas to make up the difference; he, meanwhile, runs through a string of pneumatic blondes. It all sounds a bit close to Russ Meyer, but the coarseness is controlled—Almodóvar has perfected a kind of thoroughbred horseplay. One scene, for instance, begins in bed with Ramón and Kika, who are busy logging their own activities on Polaroid. Kika gives up and goes outside onto the balcony; Almodóvar trains his camera on her and then glides it up to the apartment above, where Nicholas is in mid-seduction. It's a funny, arousing sequence, helped along by what sounds like a fairground organ playing throughout; the world is a horny carrousel, and you might as well jump on.

So why do you leave the theatre, an hour or so later, feeling so wasted and depressed? "Kika" is speckled with great moments, but they never compose themselves into satisfying dramatic shape, and the movie gasps and clutches for effect with the air of an artist who has long since had his say. The snickering naughtiness of Almodóvar's early work seems to have shifted gear into a more mercenary attitude, and the glamour has grown nasty; he has turned the page from Sternberg to Stroheim, so to speak, and the change doesn't suit him. With "Kika," as with "High Heels," you feel that he is squeezing some of the characters into the shape of his plot, forcing them to suffer humiliations that they don't deserve and to stagger around under the weight of his big ideas. The movie is especially hard on Victoria Abril, one of Almodóvar's most lithe and expressive leading ladies, who now finds herself strapped into Jean-Paul G[illegible]ltier costumes with no escape. She plays Andrea, a scarred harpy who hosts a TV show entitled "Today's Worst," which hunts down real-life horrors and replays them for the benefit of viewers. Andrea performs in a vacant auditorium, acknowledging the canned applause, or else roars around the city on a motorbike wearing a camera on her head but attracting no attention whatsoever. Almodóvar thinks that by stripping the performance back like this he can get to the essence of television's treachery, its emotional fraud; but, with no sense of an audience, the whole thing looks more like sloppy performance art than like popular entertainment. "He almost never watches TV," declares the publicity note on Almodóvar, and it shows.

Worse still, it looks like hypocrisy, for "Kika" seems to outstrip "Today's Worst" in its microscopic scrutiny of private pain. Kika employs a lesbian maid ("I want to be a prison matron"), whose delinquent brother, Pablo, breaks out of jail and ends up in the apartment, looming and leering over a supine Kika. He molests her quietly with a slice of orange: a succulent joke, I guess—a juicy finishing touch to the movie's rampant color scheme. But the joke dries up as he wakes the sleeping beauty with a rape. The scene is choreographed as farce, with cops rushing in to yank the assailant from his prey, but Pablo has a knife at her throat throughout. Moreover, the attack has been videotaped by a voyeur, which means that Kika, the victim, then has to watch it all over again. Her distress looks strong and genuine, but Almodóvar backs it up with a hot, excitable drum solo; whatever the character may feel about being raped, the director is turned on.

The Almodóvar fan club defends his movies on the ground that they are always full of life; to complain of their incoherence makes you sound like a killjoy, and to find them objectionable merely sets you apart as a prude. But I simply didn't believe that the heroine could walk away so blithely at the end, offer a ride to a passing hunk, and drive off toward her next adventure. "Kika" may be full of life, but it's a borrowed life, a sheaf of second-hand gestures spruced up to look like new. And, however much we laugh at the Sirk-like excesses, they aren't very difficult to achieve; a genre as lurid as melodrama, forever wavering on the rim of self-parody, needs only the faintest of nudges to tip it over the edge. "Kika" heads straight for cult status without even trying to hold together; its mania feels cold and strained, miles away from the likable scattiness of "Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" or "What Have I Done to Deserve This?" With its smart compositions and patches of bright beauty, it makes you reflect on the destiny of a director who has decided to treat cinema as Pop art—a brave direction to take, but do we really want to sit in the dark

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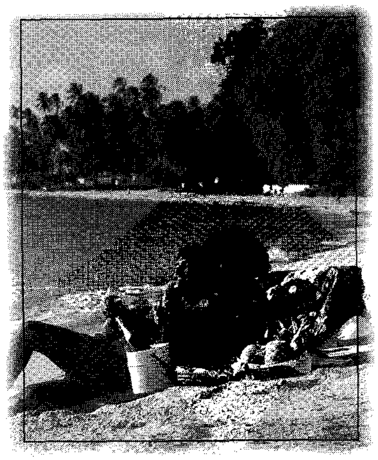

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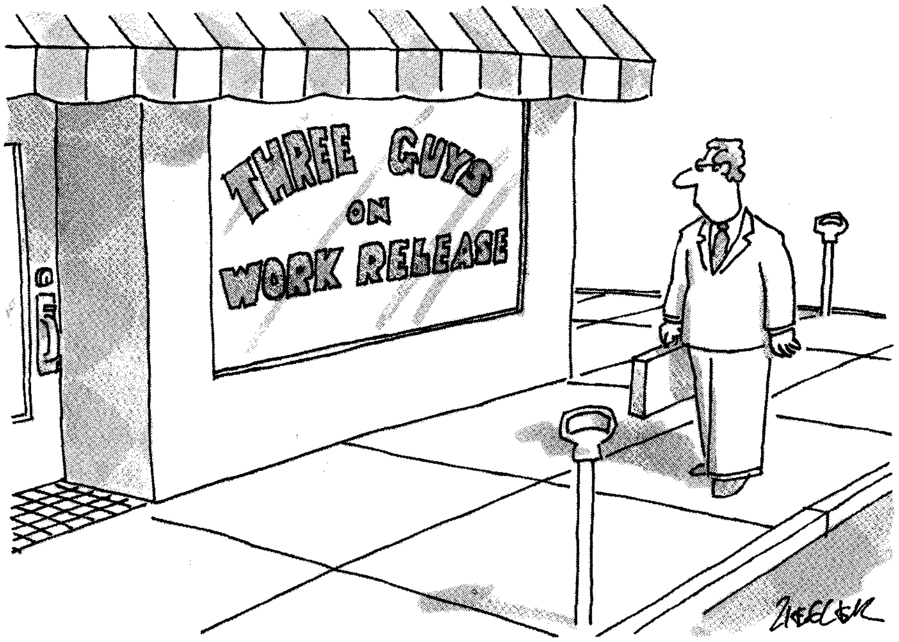
"KIKA" originally earned itself an NC-17 rating from the M.P.A.A., although the distributors were quick to file an appeal and had the decision overturned; the censors might be interested to learn that an even more shocking movie was released, uncontested, at the same time. I refer, of course, to "That's Entertainment! III," the third—and surely the last—compilation of clips from the treasure trove of the Hollywood musical. The format is unchanged, with surviving stars rolling up to introduce snippets of their younger selves. Without wishing to be unchivalrous, I have to say that the discrepancy between then and now is becoming rather alarming. No one, for instance, could worship more devoutly than I at the feet of Ann Miller, and I was delighted to find that she is alive and well; but it was still a bit of a shock to *see* her alive and well. Why not simply show her alive and kicking in "On the Town," and skip her commentary? The great musicals thrived on the myth of ageless, ever-moving bodies, and the myth needs to be kept untouched. "That's Entertainment! III" gets it all wrong, urging us to tell the dancer from the dance.

One more hitch: most of the classic sequences were snapped up by the two earlier compilations, so what we have now is a feast of side orders and leftovers. It's heaven to see Gene Kelly hoofing away in "Summer Stock," his only partners an old newspaper and a squeaky floorboard, but he's an island of grace in an ocean of kitsch. There are costumes here that make "Kika" look like Savile Row; one smiling chorus girl was, as far as I could see, about to be strangled by a small pink willow. And, whatever you do, make sure you catch the Ross Sisters—three of them, spotless in farmyard gingham, all doing the crab, and finally coming together in a sort of human reef knot. Normally, you have to go to Hamburg to watch stuff like this. There's also a couple of instructive split screens: a solo number by Fred Astaire, for example, from "The Belle of New York," paired with an earlier outtake. Same dance, different clothes—and identical movements, thus proving what we have always known, that rehearsal made him inch-perfect. At the other extreme, we have Cyd Charisse and Joan Crawford performing "Two-Faced Woman." Both versions were dubbed by India Adams; Cyd's was dropped from "The Band Wagon," but somebody, somewhere, decided to use Joan's in "Torch Song" (1953). Middle-aged, mad-eyed, and made up in blackface—a spectacle guaranteed to set American race relations back by a decade—Joan finishes by ripping off her fright wig to reveal her own, flame-orange hair, which is even *more* of a fright. Her expression is frozen in a wild rictus, and the camera holds on it in appalled fascination, unable to drag itself away. Almodóvar would love it. ♦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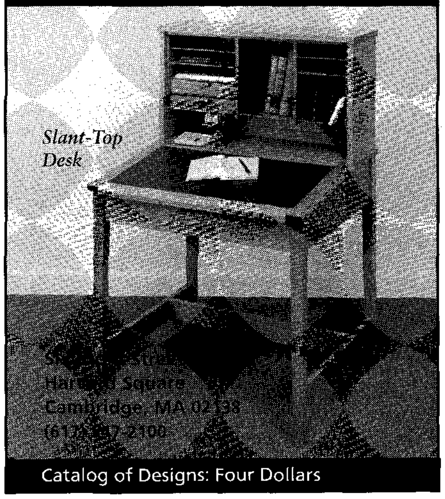

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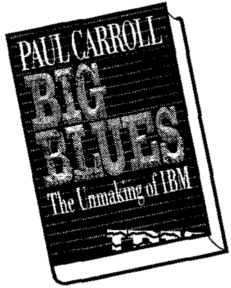

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FICTION

What a Piece of Work I Am (A Confabulation)

by Eric Kraft

(Crown; $22)

ARIANE LODKOCHNIKOV is practically a walking sex fantasy—her nickname is Tootsie Koochikov, and she is so alluring that even her dopey brothers spy on her through chinks in the bedroom wall. But when she realizes that she is also the Babbington, Long Island, town slut she sets out to remake herself. She begins at a local big-money tourist motel. Disillusioned, however, with what seemed a conventional route to at least material improvement, she moves on, finding the devotion of an elderly neighbor for his dying wife about the highest thing life can offer. Her fate is to be a modern-day Ariadne, though, which means that almost any path she tries is a dead end or loops back to where she started. That should be frustrating to the reader, but it's when we come upon new versions of what we've seen before that the novel is most droll and delighting. It conveys a sense of sheer play that a reader may not have experienced since building a fort in the back yard or setting up a dolls' tea party.

The Girls

by Elaine Kagan

(Knopf; $23)

WAS Pete a good guy or was he really bad is the big question on the minds of five middle-aged Kansas City "girls," whose former best friend—Pete's wife, Jessie—has killed him. He slept with some of the women, who were high-school pals, during his marriage, but he also faithfully cared for the group's collective black mammy and his unhappy sister-in-law, and greatly cheered the group's star, Frances, who has a successful bicoastal acting career, and a mastectomy. The story opens skillfully, with monologues by some of the women as they tell the visiting Frances exactly what happened on the fateful day and give their perspectives on the charming, vicious dead man. The elegance of form, however, is sacrificed for the sake of all sorts of melodrama around the funeral and a final chapter narrated by the stiff. This book is just literary enough to offer the pleasures of pulp to more serious readers, and is pulpy enough, probably, for anyone.

Try

by Dennis Cooper

(Grove; $20)

ZIGGY MCCAULEY, the smelly teenage protagonist of this bleakly funny novel, was sexually abused as a child by one of the two gay men who adopted him, and by that man's obese brother, who makes child pornography and doesn't draw the line at necrophilia. In the course of the story, Ziggy also accepts the carnal attentions of his other adoptive dad, a rock critic whose sexual tastes, as specialized as they are unsavory, are presented in a deft parody of the pretensions of pop-culture analysts. Ziggy's consolations are editing a zine (called *I Apologize*) for fellow abuse victims and adoring a young heroin addict whose quest for numbness becomes increasingly understandable to the reader as Cooper's Swiftian take on human nature becomes increasingly persuasive.

GENERAL

It All Adds Up: From the Dim Past to the Uncertain Future

by Saul Bellow

(Viking; $23.95)

SOME well-meaning soul apparently held a gun to Bellow's head and forced him to bring out this anthology, for Bellow himself betrays little enthusiasm about the project, contributing a title that is the verbal equivalent of a shrug and a preface more or less recommending that the book be regarded as a record of error. Why the elaborate diffidence? The pieces (the earliest is from 1948) include travel reports (from Spain, Paris, Tuscany, Vermont), addresses (the 1976 Nobel lecture), news stories (from the Six-Day War), eulogies, interviews, and reminiscences (mainly of Chicago, Bellow's home town), and are lucid, edgy, bittersweet—in short, unmistakably Bellovian. Certain pet quotations and anecdotes recur; and the intellectual world of the thirties is a stone so frequently touched that one begins to feel that very little in American life has interested Bellow since. If there is a turn reflected in the collection, it is the one that occurred around the time of "Humboldt's Gift," when a semi-Tolstoyan spiritualism seemed to seize Bellow's work. "Everything worth living for has melted away," he says in a 1993 essay; and when he writes in that vein he is both most urgent and most baffling. But he is never merely doctrinaire, and "error" seems an inappropriate category for this varied and modest bouquet.

Paul Revere's Ride

by David Hackett Fischer

(Oxford; $27.50)

THE action in this exciting history illuminates New England's culture—especially the ways that it differed from old England's—on the eve of the American Revolution. General Thomas Gage, the British Army commander, assumed that society was run from the top down, while Paul Revere, the Boston silversmith and rebel courier, was used to a world that was organized from the bottom up. When Emerson's "embattled farmers" mustered at Lexington and Concord in response to Revere's alarm, they and their elected officers began by debating where and how their units should meet the British raid. By the night of Revere's famous ride, all of Massachusetts' self-governing institutions, and not just the militia, had become a resistance network. It was an underground that Revere had helped create and in which he had innumerable allies and helpers who, like him, were out that night giving the warning that a substantial British force was on the march. Fischer's details are meticulous, and provide an irresistible sense of immediacy as a slumbering countryside is wakened to war. ♦

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

SPRAY-PAINTING SINGAPORE

BY BILL FRANZEN

THAT guy Michael Fay isn't the only one who's had to face the music over here in Singapore. But at least I knew the danger well before I dived off a coal freighter and sneaked into town. In fact, I count on the danger. I've helped the Kurdish resistance circulate counterfeit dinars to further destabilize Saddam. I've taught evasive-driving techniques to Chad refugees training as anti-Qaddafi guerrillas. On moonless nights, I've hang-glided over the great nuclear facilities of North Korea, taking infrared photographs—for my own use, of course. But I have to say that the adrenaline rush you get from spray-painting graffiti around Singapore, what with the threat of a good, ritualistic caning, is the thing that makes me feel the most alive.

I don't have any excuses. I'm just a thrill-seeking American rebel at heart, one who grew up free-climbing national monuments and surfing on beaches that the United States Navy saves for testing mines. Nowadays, I'm thinking globally, getting most of my kicks by going up against the really primo authoritarian states. (My parents still think I'm in college.)

Here in Sing Singapore, I found the bored and repressed young locals in dire need of *someone* to spring them from their brain death. Someone to teach them how to move through the cement jungles virtually unnoticed. Someone really into spraying-by-the-seat-of-your-pants-type risks.

My all-time fave enamel is Krylon Flashbulb Silver. When I wrote "GOTTA SPRAY IT TO SAY IT" across the doors of all the banks in Singapore's financial district, the sparkling metallic finish of the paint made it visible for blocks, and this was with *no* surface preparation. Increasingly popular now with the most radical young Singaporeans are the weatherproof fluorescents, all of which dry fast to a smooth, professional finish. Case in point: My new buddy Mickey Teng and I used Krylon Fiery Tangerine to spray (undetected) "CANE CHAIRS, NOT PEOPLE!" on all four sides of the famous Empress Place Museum. A government cleaning crew was climbing up and down scaffolding there for weeks, but still you can read it at night. Picture, too, if you will, in nitro-green balloon letters on the zoo tram, my "THE CITY OF THE LION NEEDS TO FIND THE COURAGE TO PARDON." I've got to say I was too amped for that job, and, unfortunately, even at that predawn hour bystander interference led to my being arrested.

I successfully thwarted my interrogators, who badly wanted me to name names. But I wasn't able to escape my sentence: six strokes, same as Mike got before they wimped out. When I reacted—I swear all I said was "Shoot!"—the judge made it twelve. Then, when I spit out my gum (I didn't know about *that* rule), he made it twenty-five strokes. But then, when I said, "Don't you mean twenty-four?"—*whammo!*—he makes it fifty. Next thing I remember, I'm being revived by a Singaporean military doctor. Still, the industrial-strength flogging that followed wasn't nearly as bad as you'd think: my butt looked way uglier when I wiped out at Pipeline and got drilled smack onto the coral bottom.

Sadly, though, I must soon use my authentic-looking passport to leave dear Singapore and begin my journey to Belgrade. Spray-painting, say, "FOR A GOOD TIME, CALL RADOVAN KARADZIC AND SLOBODAN MILOSEVIC," with the élite counter-graffiti units of the Serbs about to pounce any second, sounds like Heaven to this here adrenaline junkie. But, first, I leave my fellow-Singaporean limit-breakers a few more tips:

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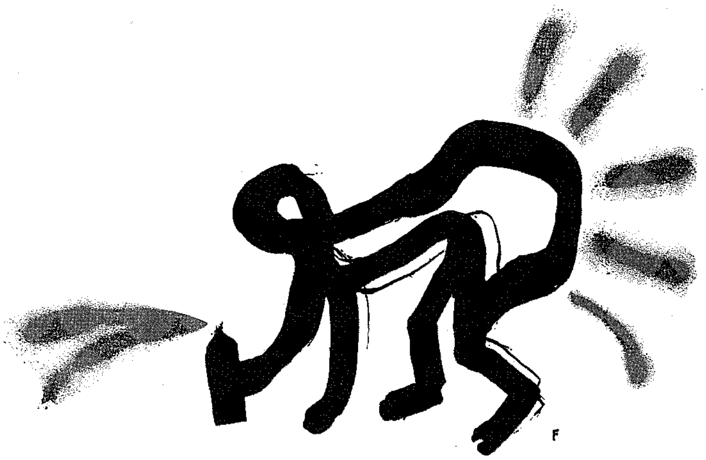
No. 2: Change labels. With a little creativity, you can make a spray-paint can look like Silly String or bug repellent or an emergency tire inflater.

No. 3: Watch the exercise video "Buns of Steel." Can't hurt. ♦



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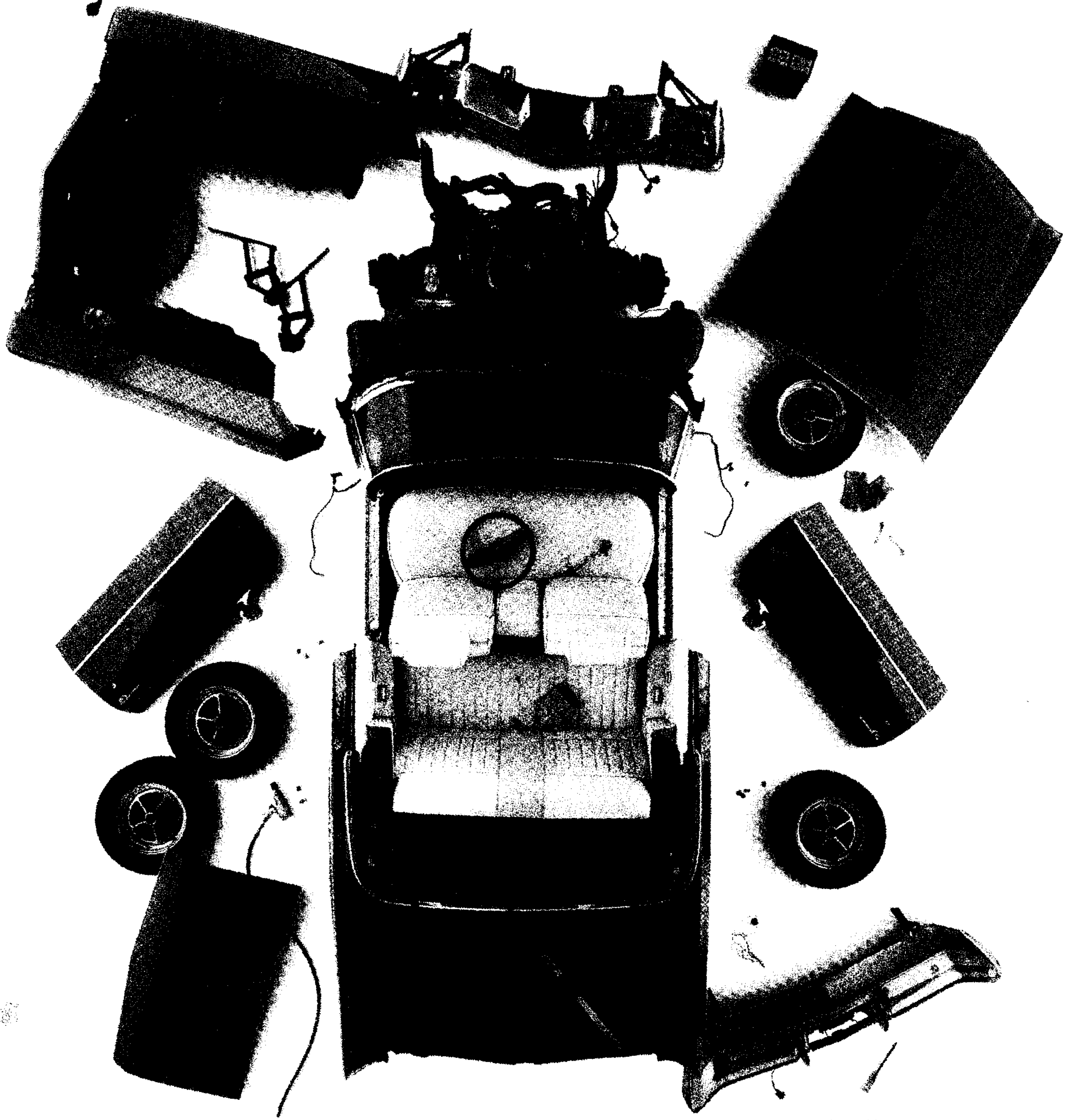

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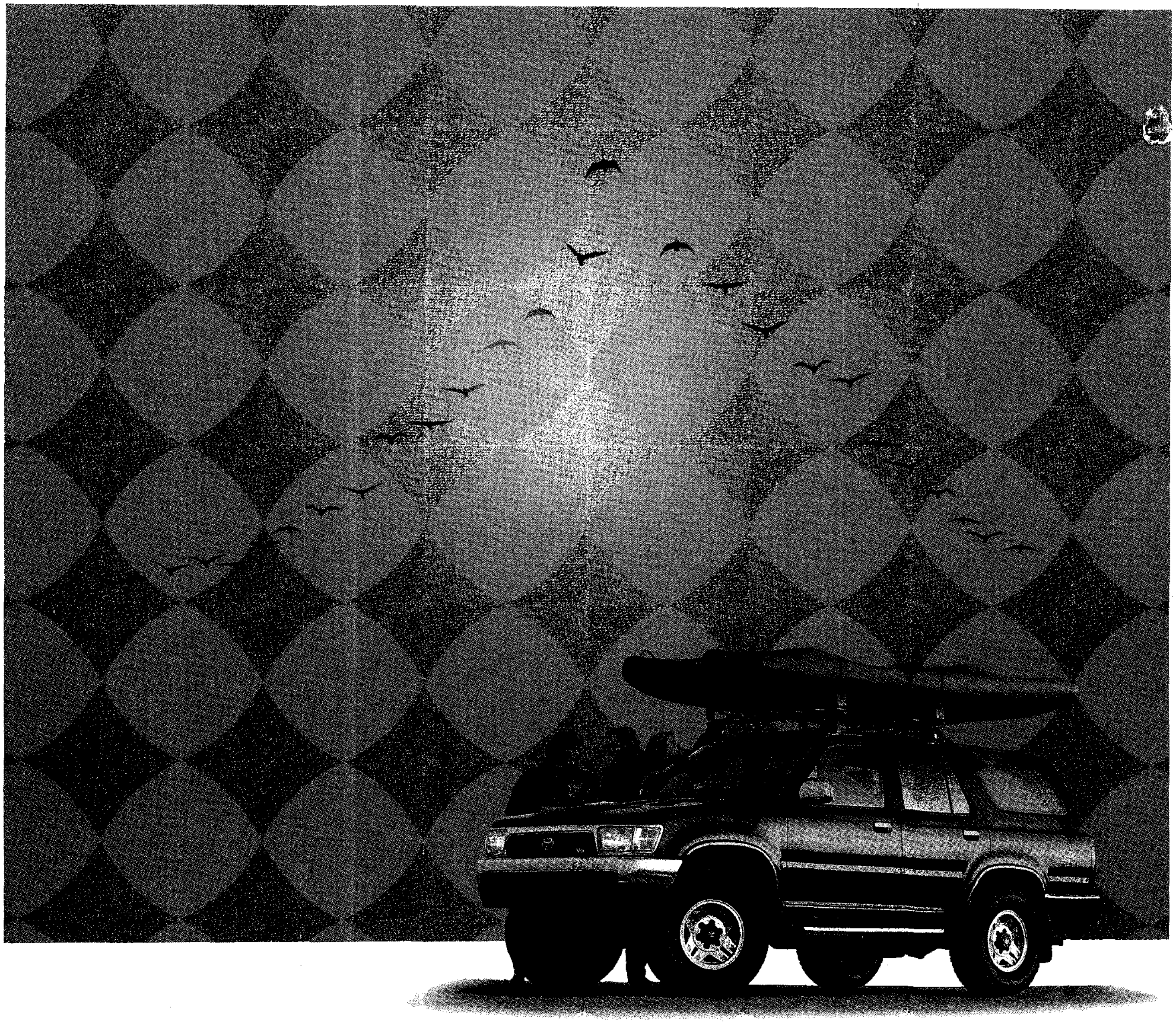

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